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# Housing Betterment

JANUARY, 1923

A Journal of Housing Advance

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# Housing Betterment

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## THE SITUATION IN ENGLAND.

THE housing situation in England is very much the same as it was when last discussed in this journal some months ago,\* notwithstanding the fact that since that time there have been momentous changes in England itself. One Government has fallen and another has risen in its place. There has also been a General Election at which the new Government was confirmed by a large majority.

While Housing played a part in the election, it could hardly be said to have constituted an issue, if an outsider 3,000 miles distant can judge accurately so delicate a thing as a political situation in a foreign country. The views of those ardent housing reformers who had been predicting for some months past that the electorate would be heard from in no uncertain tones on the question of housing, do not seem to have been realized.

In any event Lloyd George is gone and Bonar Law is in his place. There is a new Minister of Health. In place of Sir Alfred Mond there is now Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen.

No very definite new policy as to Housing has as yet emerged. The new Government, so far as Housing is concerned, is proceeding along the lines of its immediate predecessor, and the policy announced by Sir Alfred Mond of completing in round figures 176,000 houses contracted for some time ago, is being continued by the new government.

## THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S POLICY.

Speaking in the House of Commons quite recently the Solicitor-General, Mr. Inskip, made the following pronouncement on this subject:

The conditions of housing in our large cities could only

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\*Housing Betterment, April, 1922.

be viewed by anyone aware of them with the most profound misgivings, and he believed that there was a universal desire for a change. The great experiment of four years ago was launched with great energy and enthusiasm. There was reckless expenditure by the State and municipalities, but the result of the enormous outlay of public money was a comparatively inadequate return in houses, only about 200,000 being produced. The State, by this scheme, had been committed to an expenditure of something like £9,000,000 a year for the next 60 years. While the State scheme at that time held the field, private enterprise took a back place. But the Government's scheme did not solve the problem, and it was brought to an end in June of last year, with the result that the total number of houses that would be provided under the schemes was just over 215,000, which with another 3,000 dwellings that had been provided by the conversion of huts and hostels would make something like 220,000 dwellings. At present 188,000 houses had been actually completed, or had been completed on November 1. Of the 176,000 houses to which the local authority and public utility schemes were limited, 11,000 had not yet been begun and work was proceeding on 118,000, so that there were something over 30,000 houses on which work still remained to be done.

The only statement which the Government could make at present was that houses could, in their opinion, be more advantageously provided by those whose business it was to build houses than by the State. The Government was most anxious that private enterprise which, when all was said and done, had provided large numbers of houses in the past, should be encouraged to develop its great resources. The considerations which the Government would give to the problem would be along those lines. They would consider whether any action on their part, including possibly the extension of existing provisions under which private builders could borrow money at reasonable rates, would assist in that direction. There were already signs of a revival in private enterprise in building. Local authorities were showing a readiness to undertake building without State aid. Thirty-five local authorities had already undertaken to build houses without State assistance, and another 60 were considering proceeding on those lines.



One thing was quite certain in the view of the Government. It was that the continuation of the present system, under which the liability of the local authorities was fixed at a penny rate, while the Government contribution was unlimited, could not be contemplated. Whether any scheme under which the Government was to provide financial assistance would offer better hope still remained for consideration. The failure of the State scheme was largely due to the enormous cost of building. That cost had fallen very considerably, and the last tenders received for a three-roomed house were for £297 each. That began to approach an economic level. The desire of the present Government was to carry out and extend the policy of the late Minister of Health, which was to assist local authorities in providing houses into which to put the population of slums. The Government would do all possible to enforce the powers of local authorities to acquire slum areas and to clear them. The Government had undertaken to provide a sum which at present was not to exceed £200,000 every year towards the deficiencies of local authorities in slum areas.

Commenting on the present situation, *Garden Cities and Town Planning* has the following to say on the present political situation :

Whatever may be the opinions of its individual members, the Association is neither disappointed nor elated by the results of the General Election. It is true that certain parties have been quick to declare that no new National Housing Scheme will now be produced, and that early steps will be taken to repeal the Rent Restriction Acts. We do not feel any certainty on either of these points. If the Rent Restriction Acts are repealed the housing issue will become clearer—and more acute—than ever, and no determination to live in “tranquillity” could resist the pressure for an adjustment of wages which—to the great profit, be it said, of the owners of houses built before the war—would enable economic rents to be paid for houses built at post-war prices.

The production of a National Housing Scheme is not so important as the formulation of a National Housing Policy which will, quite apart from *a priori* convictions on the desirability or detestability of State enterprise, secure the provision of an adequate number of houses, of adequate

quality, in the places where their building will most adequately meet the industrial and social needs of the country. In any case there is no need to despair of a Government which has expressed its intention of securing peace and tranquillity. There can be no peace for any Government which does not deal constructively with the material conditions which create discontent and unrest, physical deterioration and moral disintegration.

The Conservative Party has a curiously good record in social policy, and in appointing Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen to the Ministry of Health the Premier had no doubt in mind the fact that he has in the past shown a keen interest in the housing problem, and has already declared that, though the ultimate purpose of a housing policy must be to restore house building to the operation of private enterprise, he recognizes the probable necessity of an emergency scheme to deal with the present position. Any analysis of the present position must show the necessity of a policy which will deal with the arrears of housing which have accrued up to date and with the machinery necessary for seeing that further arrears do not accrue.

Carrying out its consistent policy of aiding the Government to formulate a policy and to grapple with the housing problem effectively, the National Housing and Town Planning Council, of which Mr. Henry R. Aldridge is the energetic secretary, has recently arranged for a series of regional Housing Conferences to be held in different parts of Great Britain to consider the question of future terms of financial co-operation between the Government and local authorities. The first of these conferences is to be held at Glasgow the latter part of January. Two days later a similar conference is to be held in Manchester and about a week later a further conference at Leeds. Additional conferences will be held in quick succession at various other places in England and Wales.

### THREE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS.

Three alternative proposals dealing with this question of state aid have been postulated by the National Housing and Town Planning Council in all of which it should be noted much em-



phasis is placed upon the proposal that no matter what the arrangements to be made between the Government and the local authorities for financial aid, the local authorities shall have "freedom of action concerning both the details of their schemes and the administration of them when completed."

These three proposals may be stated as follows:

1. That a definite sum per house per year be given by the State to those local authorities undertaking assisted housing schemes in 1923 to be payable for the whole of the loan period for the houses.

2. That the State should pay a definite sum per house built under an assisted housing scheme, such sum to represent a percentage of the loss as set forth in an estimate to be submitted to the Ministry of Health before the contract for the houses is accepted by the local authorities.

3. That the State should lend capital to local authorities at the rate of interest current before the war, viz.,  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ , the difference between the rate at which the capital is thus loaned and the rate at which the State borrows the money to represent the subsidy given by the State in aid of the housing schemes of local authorities.

At the Conference called by the National Housing and Town Planning Council held at York the latter part of November, the Conference declared for the first of these schemes, viz., a lump sum appropriation per house per year to be given by the State to the local authorities throughout the period of the loan.

In correspondence recently made public between Mr. Aldridge and the former Minister of Health, Sir Alfred Mond, it is pointed out that this plan is one which it is understood that Sir Alfred Mond was about to recommend to the Government just before the recent Government fell.

### SIR ALFRED MOND'S PLAN.

On this point Sir Alfred Mond has the following to say:

Before leaving office I formulated a scheme which—reversing the policy of making the local authority a fixed partner with the State in housing—made the State a contributor to a

fixed grant per annum of between £3 and £4 per house, leaving to the local authority the responsibility of any further deficit between the annual charge and the rent it could obtain, but also leaving to the local authority a free hand as to the manner in which it would build, subject of course to a general supervision by the Ministry of Health as to a reasonable standard.

The National Housing and Town Planning Council at the York Conference the latter part of November also discussed the proposal that the State should give financial aid to private enterprise but reported against this proposal on the ground that such subsidies would need to be so carefully safeguarded with regard to the securing of precedence to ex-service men and to large families as tenants, and with reference to the amount of rent to be charged, as to render the proposal impracticable. These objections were not felt to pertain, however, to grants to public utility societies.

In the Conferences to be held in January this question of subsidy to public utility societies and to the purchasers of new houses built under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, as well as tax exemption of new dwellings will be discussed. In addition these Conferences except to consider some of the important details connected with the clearance of "slum areas" including such questions as the types of houses to be built, the desirability of rehousing on the cleared sites, of the migration of the population thus dispossessed to suburban areas and also the possibility of securing attention to the repair of houses not in all respects fit for human habitation.

## THE VIEW OF GARDEN CITIES AND TOWN PLANNING.

Discussing these proposals and a number of others that have been made with regard to the new Government's housing policy, the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association in its journal *Garden Cities and Town Planning* has the following to say:

The housing problem is so vast and complex that it is not reasonable to expect any single solution to cover the whole field. It may, therefore, be of value to indicate the methods which from one quarter or another have been suggested since



the collapse of the Housing Policy of 1919. Views on what the National Housing Policy should be have been expressed by representatives of every school of thought, and the policies suggested range from the revival of the full 1919 policy to a point only just short of continuing the Micawber-Mond impolicy of waiting for private enterprise to turn up while maintaining the Rent Restriction Acts. In the following statement both these extremes are ignored, because of the certainty that the former would not be tolerated and of the hope that the latter is now seen to be ridiculous.

The first group of suggestions may be ranged under the following four headings:

(A) NATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

1. That the State should loan money to local authorities at a low rate of interest to enable them to make full use of the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act.

2. That the State should loan money at a low rate of interest to enable local authorities to build houses which on this basis of cheap money could be let at economic rents.

3. That local authorities should receive a flat rate subsidy to enable them to build houses of approximately Tudor Walters' standard at similar rents to those obtained for houses governed by the Rent Restriction Acts.

4. That local authorities should be encouraged to deal with slums with a limitation of their liability to the proceeds of a penny rate and should leave private enterprise to meet existing arrears and to provide the annual increment in houses made necessary by the normal increase in families.

The second group of suggestions would throw the duty of housing on the local authorities without assistance from the State.

(B) UNASSISTED ACTION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

1. That the local authorities should in accordance with section I of the 1919 Act meet the housing needs of their district and charge any deficit to the rates.

2. That the local authorities should meet the housing needs of their district so far as is possible on the proceeds of a three-penny rate.

3. That the local authorities should build tenements of one

and two rooms to meet the need of those who cannot pay the rents of houses provided by private enterprise.

The third group of suggestions come under the heading of

(C) ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE BUILDERS:

1. That private builders should be encouraged to build by the remission of rates on houses under a certain rental for a period of five years.

2. That private builders should be encouraged to build by the exemption of the builder or lender from income tax for five years.

3. That local authorities should develop land by street and sewer works and lease the land thus developed at a low price to private builders.

4. That private builders should receive a flat rate subsidy of the same kind, though smaller in amount, as that given under the Additional Powers Act.

5. That private builders should be enabled to borrow money from the State at a low rate of interest.

6. That private builders should be encouraged to build houses by the repeal of all legislation, local or national, which restricts their operations; and

7. That all Rent Restriction Acts should be repealed and the housing shortage met by the consequent adjustment of wages.

The fourth group of suggestions are made under the heading of

(D) ASSISTANCE TO PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETIES:

1. That Public Utility Societies should receive loans at a low rate of interest or subsidy.

2. That Public Utility Societies should receive a flat rate subsidy.

The fifth group of suggestions are designed to throw the duty of building houses on employers. Under this method employers would either pay wages sufficiently high to enable their employees to pay economic rents or they would subsidize directly the houses built.

In addition to the above proposals, the general theory represented by the phrase "family endowment" has also received a considerable measure of publicity. It is felt by some that the basic paradox of the housing problem is that rent can be



least well afforded precisely at the time when most accommodation is required, i. e., that a family which contains a number of young children requires most accommodation when the family's ability to pay rent is at its lowest. It is not our purpose to discuss the remedies suggested above in detail. We believe that somehow or another a sufficiency of houses must be built and that they must be built in the right places.

## THE PROGRESS OF THE GOVERNMENT SCHEMES.

The latest figures obtainable indicate that on November first, last, the following progress had been made in England and Wales on the various Government housing schemes :

Estimates approved	168,795
Contracts signed	166,630
Houses commenced	164,618
Houses finished	145,771

Similar progress has been made in Scotland. There the situation as of November 1, was :

Permanent houses built	12,144
Temporary houses completed	665
Reconstructed houses completed	89
Houses completed under private subsidy scheme	2,160
	<hr/>
	15,058

In addition to the 145,771 houses that have been built in England by the local authorities, 39,145 houses have been built by private enterprise with the assistance of a Government subsidy. For these houses the cost to the Government of the subsidy has been £9,600,000 or an average of about £240 per house (\$1166 par). The cost to the Government of the 2160 houses constructed by private enterprise under Government subsidy in Scotland is £522,936, or £242 per house. It is interesting to note that the amount of this subsidy per house is more than two-thirds of the entire cost of building a complete house at the present time. Of course the explanation is to be had in the fact that a little over a year ago houses were costing £1.000 each as against £346 at the present time.

## THE COST OF BUILDING.

As in America, the cost of building in England has been the vital factor in the housing situation but in striking contrast to the situation in America the cost of building in England has materially decreased during the year due to deflation of both material and labor costs. According to the latest official Government figures, houses of the "A" type (without parlor) were contracted for in October at £346 a house and houses of the "B" type (with parlors) were contracted for at that time at £407 a house.

In two English cities, Leicester and Nottingham houses are actually being produced at costs slightly under £300 for the non-parlor type of house. As a result of this situation there has been a rather widespread discussion of the £300 house in which the builders' organizations have held up their hands and exclaimed in holy horror at the consequences of houses being built on such low standards.

A study of the plans of the £300 houses built at Nottingham indicates that the houses are of an excellent type and depart only in comparatively minor respects from the standards of the Tudor Walters' Report.

It appears that the results achieved have been made possible through a careful study of intelligent methods of economy without undue sacrifice of the essentials of proper standards of living; for, the Government has not permitted any departure from such essentials. In the £300 house rooms are of adequate size and properly lighted and the amenities preserved.

The chief elements in the economies that have produced the £300 house are:

1. By keeping side walls low a minimum of outside 9 inch walls is obtained.
2. There are no hips, valleys or lead gutters.
3. The downstairs bedroom, which is sometimes desirable as a bedroom and can be used as a parlor or study, enables good frontage to be given without added expense of brickwork.
4. All smoke flues are taken into one stack.
5. Lead piping is reduced to a minimum, as the eight points in a pair of houses requiring water are all in a line.
6. The staircase is perfectly straight, and landing-space is economized by not having a third bedroom on the first floor.

While from the point of view of the United States such houses would be well within the purchasing power of the average work-

man, it should be remembered that wages are on a different basis in the two countries and even the £346 house is still beyond the purchasing power or renting power of the average British workman.

While, of course, it cannot be expected that the same rate of decrease in the cost of building that has taken place during the past year in England can be maintained in the near future, still, if even a small decrease in building costs is maintained, there is every likelihood that private enterprise can once more function. In fact, there are increasing signs of the possibility of the private builder once more entering the field and providing the houses needed by the people of England.

The policy of the present Government, like that of its immediate predecessor, is to bring about this result at the earliest possible moment.

### THE £150 HOUSE.

Two recent indications of the decreased cost of building in England are to be found in the statement recently published in the London Times that working-class dwellings could now be built for £150 and that such a house could be let at an economic rent.

Following up this suggestion an architect describes such a house in a recent issue of *The Builder* indicating that a substantial bungalow consisting of living room, scullery and two bedrooms of adequate size can be built for the price stated and could be rented at a rental of 10 shillings a week. Of course such a house does not contain all of the conveniences which an American workingman would demand, such as running water, &c., but does contain a watercloset, a "copper" so dear to the English heart, and water in the scullery. Also a sink and a fixed tub in the wash-house which can be used as a bath.

Another indication of the return to sanity and to economic conditions is to be found in the recent competition organized by *The Builder* in which prizes amounting to £300 are offered in two competitions. The purpose of the first competition, which is open to architects, is

To encourage house building by demonstrating that it is possible to obtain substantial houses on an economically sound basis and to direct the attention of architects to that side of house-design which deals with the provision of convenient



accommodation at reasonable cost, and which obtains its artistic expression from the practical necessities of the case and from the right use of the materials of construction.

The second competition, open to builders, is promoted for the purpose of clearing up the present uncertainty as to the cost of house-building.

## BUILDING BY-LAWS.

One of the means of reducing the cost of building in the minds of many of England's architects, must come through the standardization and modernization of the building by-laws.

It appears that in England the 1800 different local authorities throughout that country have each enacted their own set of building regulations or by-laws with results that one would naturally anticipate.

The evils that have grown up under such a system have in recent years become very manifest to the building fraternity and there is a well-expressed public sentiment, if not an organized one, for the adoption by the Central Government of a basic building code. It appears that Scotland adopted such a code a few years ago though England has not as yet come to it.

A most illuminating discussion of this subject was recently had before the Royal Institute of British Architects when Mr. A. N. C. Shelley read a paper on "The Law of Building Outside London" in which he reviewed the history of building regulation in Great Britain as far back as 1840.

One of the chief elements in the British building by-laws which have added to the cost of building is to be found in the regulations with respect to new streets. Recently a Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Health has recommended that all by-laws with respect to new streets and buildings should be reviewed at least every 10 years.

## "THE BETRAYAL OF THE SLUMS."

All students of Government Housing will be interested in some of the by-products of the recent change in the housing policy of the British Government. These by-products are to be found in two small volumes recently published: one of these is by the late Minister of Health Dr. Christopher Addison. Notwithstanding its sensational title, "The Betrayal of the Slums" proves to be a

dispassionate and fair-minded discussion of the serious effects that bad housing conditions have upon the nation and the failure of the Government to carry out its pledge to deal with this situation.

The other book published anonymously under the title of "The Housing Question" By a Former Housing Commissioner, is much more of a political document and is written with a great deal of bitterness which unfortunately detracts from the effect of the document.

## SCOTLAND'S SLUMS.

The spotlight has been thrown once more upon the slums of Edinburgh, in a 16-page pamphlet recently issued under the title of the "Housing of the Poor in Edinburgh", gotten out as a Report of the Joint-Committee of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and of the United Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh.

This little pamphlet is one of the most effective documents that we have seen in some time and is a credit to "the cloth" in its restrained, dispassionate and clear-cut presentation of bare facts. Part I sets forth in three pages the facts in the South-East Wards, a second Part deals with the progress and experience in bettering these conditions through a 56-year period, a third Part discusses the effect of bad housing upon home life and the moral and spiritual condition of the people, quoting instances from the experience of parish ministers to bear this out, while a fourth Part discusses briefly in a single page the causes of the conditions disclosed, and the possible remedies for them.

Valuable as the report is, there is nothing in it of greater value than the quotation from the Report of the Royal Commission on Housing in Scotland which it prints as its Foreword, rightly concentrating attention upon the most serious evil in the housing conditions of all Scotland, viz., *life in one room* :

### LIFE IN ONE ROOM.

Let us ask ourselves what life in one room can be, taken at its best . . . Consider whether, since the world began, man or angel ever had such a task set before them as this—the creation of the elements of a home, or the conduct of family life within four bare walls . . . You mothers, with your cooks and housemaids, your nurses and general servants, how would you in your own persons act all those parts

in one room, where, too, you must eat and sleep and find your lying-in room and make your sick bed? You fathers, with your libraries and parlors—your evening hours undisturbed by washing days, your children brought to you when they can amuse you, and far removed when they become troublesome, how long would you continue to be that pattern husband which you are—in one room?

You children, with your nurseries and nurses . . . your space to play in without being trodden upon . . . your prattle which does not disturb your sick mamma, your seclusion from contact with the dead, and the still worse familiarity with the living, where would you find your innocence, and how would you preserve the dew and freshness of your infancy—in one room? . . . You sick ones, how would *you* deport yourselves in the racket and thoughtless noise of your nursery, in the heat and smells of your kitchen, in the steam and disturbance of your washing-house, for you would find all these combined in a house of one room?

In this connection it is interesting to note that important slum clearance and reconstruction schemes are under consideration by the Government for Edinburgh and Leith. Those for Edinburgh represent an outlay of £200,000 and those for Leith £82,000. In Edinburgh the total number of houses involved is 635 and 105 shops and other business premises. In Leith 558 houses are dealt with where, in addition to reconstruction, 150 new houses will be erected. In Glasgow the Town Council have recently considered a report showing that 13,000 houses will be required to replace those declared not to be reasonably fit for human habitation and the city Housing Director has been instructed to submit plans for houses to take their place, both with one room, kitchen and bath and with two rooms, kitchen and bath.

According to the Scottish Board of Health 18% of the total population of Glasgow now live in houses of only one room.

## RENT RESTRICTION.

The question of protecting tenants from extortionate rents and at the same time not unduly interfering with property interests has been a burning question in England ever since the war, even more than it has been in the United States.



One of the chief reasons for the decision of the Government in that country to undertake the building of houses at the close of the war undoubtedly lay in the fact that because of the Rent Restriction Act, which it had been found necessary to pass during the war, there was little likelihood of a resumption of building activities on the part of private enterprise for some time to come. For, it was quite out of the question to build houses on an economic basis which cost 3 to 5 times the pre-war cost and which could be rented only at pre-war rentals.

Last July the Government anticipating the expiration of the Rent Restriction Act in June 1923, caused to be set up a Government Committee

To consider the operation of the Increase of Rent and Mortgage (Restrictions) Act and to advise what steps should be taken to continue or amend the Act.

This Committee since its appointment has been taking testimony, holding public hearings and sounding public sentiment as to the operation of the Rent Restriction Act and the desirability of its extension. Under date of October 19th, last, an Interim Report was submitted by this Committee to the then Minister of Health, in accordance with the request made to the Committee at the time of its appointment, so that the question of the extension of the Act might be before Parliament during the autumn session.

In this Interim Report it is pointed out that the Committee had sought to obtain the views of the public on this important question through a questionnaire consisting of 19 detailed questions covering all the main points of difficulty and controversy which correspondence previously received by the Minister of Health had shown to exist.

Replies to this questionnaire were received from the National Federation of Property Owners and Ratepayers, the Property Owners' Protection Association, The National Federation of Property Owners and Factors of Scotland, the War Rents League, a Conference of Owners of Improved Dwellings, the Association of Women House Property Managers and the Scottish Labor Housing Association.

The Committee also obtained the views of the majority of the County Court Judges on several of the more contentious points of the Act and in addition to these sources of information also re-

ceived in answer to the published request of the Committee about 3100 letters from various sources, including in many cases elaborate statements of experience by estate agents, solicitors, private builders, tenants' associations and individual tenants and property owners.

A summary statement of the first 2500 of these letters was prepared and placed in the hands of the members of the Committee. The views thus expressed in writing were supplemented by the oral experience of witnesses representing especially the views of landlords and tenants and evidence was obtained in this manner from the following leading organizations: 13 Associations of Property Owners, 9 Associations of Tenants, 4 Trades and Labor Councils, 8 Legal Associations, 4 Technical Associations (Surveyors, Estate Agents' Institutes, &c.), 2 Government Departments, 1 Housing and Town Planning Association, 11 Local Authorities and similar bodies, 11 Trade Associations (including Building Societies), 12 Individuals or Firms (mainly Solicitors) and 1 Citizens' Association.

As a result of this sounding of public sentiment the Committee in its Interim Report states:

We are of opinion that protection of tenants against eviction and unreasonable increases of rent, as afforded by the Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act, 1920, should not be withdrawn when that Act expires in June, 1923.

We have, however, formed the opinion that in future legislation regard must be had to certain matters in the light of experience of the present Act. Among these are the questions of the further period of protection, of sub-tenancies, of the eviction of proved undesirable tenants, and of the owners of one house required *bona fide* for the owner's occupation.

Upon these and other matters time has not afforded us the opportunity of making precise recommendations.

The Report is not a unanimous one; 3 out of the total of 13 members submit a Minority Report, two because they believe there has not been sufficient time in which to reach any conclusion and the third because of dissent on the main recommendation.

The Committee will continue its deliberations under the new Government and will submit a complete report at a later date.

How complex the questions involved are may be realized from the following brief extract from the memorandum submitted to the Committee on behalf of the National Federation of Property Owners and Ratepayers of Great Britain of which Mr. A. W. Shelton of Nottingham is President. After pointing out that this Federation includes 200 affiliated associations with an aggregate membership of approximately 100,000 and that it represents the ownership or administration of probably 3,500,000 small houses in Great Britain subject to the provisions of the Rent Restrictions Act, the memorandum says:

The great organized body of house owners it represents sincerely desire to be scrupulously just and fair to all tenants who fully pay the rent and also conform in all other respects to the conditions of the tenancy.

The view which widely prevails that wholesale orders for possession would be sought if no further legislation is enacted is erroneous and misleading. Except in instances where a house is required for personal occupation by an owner, a member of his family, or an employee, there is no probability that orders for possession would generally be sought by investing owners, except in case of destructive or otherwise undesirable tenants.

Tenants included in the latter category can have no just or equitable right to legislative protection and in such cases orders for possession should be readily obtainable either from the County Court or from any Court of Summary Jurisdiction without undue cost or delay.

In this connection, it is urged that an owner should be entitled to an order for possession upon its being clearly proved that the tenant owed rent, had unlawfully sublet part or the whole of the house, or had in some other material respect failed to perform his or her obligations under the tenancy. The present discretionary powers should, in the opinion of the Executive, no longer apply to cases within the category.

That the continuance of the Rent Restriction Act is the chief factor militating against the resumption of building activity in England on the part of private enterprise, there can be no doubt.



Commenting on this subject one of the leading architectural magazines has this to say:

The problem of shortage of houses is bound up with the working of the Rent Restriction Act, which is in general principle similar to many of the controls which were in operation during the period of the war. Most of the controls were fixed with the object of encouraging the supply (as in agriculture); consequently a high price was fixed and was paid as a tax upon the nation. The object of the Rent Restriction Act was quite different; it prevented the immediate hardships which would have resulted had rentals risen to an economic level, but in doing so it automatically cut off the supply of houses. We created a monster which has placed us in a dilemma, and the state of affairs will continue until it is possible to reach an economic adjustment, either by increasing rentals or the cost of building falling until it meets the level of existing rentals.

Further testimony on this point is the statement attributed to a leading builder in the north of England who gives his own case as an illustration:

I have erected some 12,000 houses in my time, but in 1914 I closed down, have not since put one brick on another and never mean to unless the rent restrictions are removed. Like other people, I have invested my capital in sound investments yielding 6%, so why should I be troubled with controlled property and be under the thumb of tenants? The public will never have houses built under the present conditions. Extend the act and they may put aside all ideas of houses being built. There are thousands of builders like me—awaiting events. Let the rent act come to an end and building will be in full swing again inside of three months.

## THE BUILDING GUILDS.

The Building Guild movement in England has recently gotten into financial difficulties due apparently to lack of capital, application having been made to the courts by a bank in Manchester for the appointment of a receiver and manager of the National Building Guilds.

In Newcastle the local authorities recently were forced to take action by reason of the failure of the Building Guild which had contracts for the building of some of its houses to proceed with the work, the Local Guild explaining its failure on the ground that it had not been properly financed by the National Headquarters in Manchester, although its own contract monies received for the work in Newcastle had been paid over to the Manchester office. In Darlington a contract for the erection of 50 houses which had been let to the Building Guild was cancelled recently, because of the failure of the Guild to live up to its contract and proceed with the erection of the houses with due diligence. In this case the situation was such that the local employees had requested the local authorities to advance their wages, as they were unable to obtain funds at that time from the Guild treasury.

At the present time efforts are being made by the supporters of the Guild movement to get the movement out of its financial difficulties. One significant feature of the present situation seems to be the disintegration of the movement as a national movement. The Guild of Builders of London, Ltd., it is reported, has been seeking to separate itself from the national movement and thus stand on its own merits.

One of the architectural journals in commenting on the situation says:

The National Building Guild is realizing that the much-despised "capitalist system" has some virtue in it, after all. The Guild is badly in need of capital, and would be glad to have had in reserve some of the £30,000 or more which it has paid out for "wet time, holidays, and sickness." We sincerely trust that the movement will not be extinguished for want of the £50,000 loan that would set it going again; if only because its continued existence would probably serve to correct other economic fallacies with respect to capital and labor.

That lack of capital has not been the only difficulty which this movement has been encountering is evident from the statement on the present situation issued by S. G. Hobson, the chief proponent of the Building Guild movement and one of its high officials. In an article in the December issue of the *Guild Socialist* dealing with the crisis in the Building Guild movement he points out that in addition to financial difficulties caused by lack of capital, there

have been abuses on the part of the workers some of whom have taken advantage of their fellow workers and abused the continuous pay privilege. In this connection Mr. Hobson says:

We had also realized that on various sites continuous pay was being abused. In one case, a Guild Committee, barely begun on a public contract, authorized a full week's pay for the men to attend the local race-meeting. In effect, the less efficient Guild Committees were exploiting the more efficient and careful Guild Committees. We were, accordingly, compelled to issue an interim instruction that continuous pay must be stopped wherever contracts were not working out to schedule. The amount spent on continuous pay up to date is in excess of £30,000. A considerable proportion of this has been well spent, and has amply justified itself. But a good many thousands represent sheer waste; and at a time when the labor expenditure was already out of true proportion to the materials consumed.

Speaking of the Guild's financial difficulties, Mr. Hobson points out:

Towards the end of August and during September, we met with an exasperating experience. Architects and surveyors were on holiday and certificates for work done were in consequence delayed. At a critical moment we were thus squeezed by over £20,000. Add to this another fact: surveyors and architects, for months previously, had habitually under-certified for the amounts due.

By the middle of September, it is hardly surprising that our balance was tragically left-legged. We had over-spent on labor, and were faced with a mountain of accounts overdue to the merchants. During October these totalled over £25,000. By dint of close co-ordination of revenue and credit, we paid these off. But the pressure of creditors grew more and yet more acute, and by the middle of November we took the necessary legal steps to preserve the goodwill and assets of the Guild. . . .

Undoubtedly, the predisposing cause of the crisis is a serious shortage of working capital with its correlative shrinking of credit. To have spent £70,000 on plant, £30,000 on con-



tinuous pay, to have completed £1,500,000 worth of work in two short years, beginning with literally nothing, is a performance of which we may be legitimately proud. Candor, however, compels me to state that finance is not the whole story. We may truthfully aver that the Guild structure has stood the strain remarkably well. Not, unhappily, without disclosing some cracks. It would surely be amazing were it not so. . . .

The Building Guild is neither asleep nor dead. We are awake and alive. Our present is dangerous, our future difficult; but the persistence of the Guild is guaranteed by its undoubted vitality.

Commenting on this situation, the Organizing Secretary of the National Federation of Building Trades' Employers has the following to say:

The offer of Messrs. Mactaggart, contractors, of Glasgow, to take over the work of the Building Guilds and to advance £50,000 at 6%, thus enabling the creditors to receive an immediate payment of 10s. in the £, subject to Messrs. Mactaggart taking control for three years, having been accepted at the creditors' meeting held in Manchester on Tuesday last week, the 19th inst., a short survey of the events which have led to such an arrangement may prove instructive. In this the Building Guilds will be found to have spoken very clearly on their own behalf through their own mouthpiece, *The Building Guildsman*, in the six issues which appeared between December, 1921, and June, 1922. The sad story is unfolded on the title-page as of one who would run before he can walk, growing hysterical, falls, and breaks his neck. For the first declares the day to be near at hand when there shall be no need for capital; No. 2 is decoratively treated with "£150,000" in large black type; No. 3 gives evidence of the growing desire for a voice in the control on behalf of the Guild workmen, and is entitled "Works Committees"; No. 4, by way of "The Race between Guild Quality and Guild Costs," hints at the S.O.S. appearing on No. 6, "Lend Promptly *or* the Building Guild Can't Develop."

History then takes up the tale, and the Co-operative Wholesale Society, in the words of the Secretary to the National

Building Guild, Ltd., "declined any accommodation on maximum-sum contracts"; and, further, "the Federation of Building Trade Operatives, realizing the situation, promptly provided the necessary guarantee, and all our contracts are proceeding."

However, at the fifth Conference of the Building Workers' International, held at Vienna on October 2-5, 1922, Mr. Hicks, the President of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, is reported as having said of the Guilds that they "must adopt the capitalist system in order to function; they must enter into competition with the master builder in order to continue to exist, which would mean adopting similar tactics in competing for work . . . so there was every possibility of the trade unions, as such, having to fight the Guilds in order to maintain the agreed standards."

It would seem that the guarantee of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives was of a limited nature, because during November a receiver was appointed on the petition of a Manchester bank, and Guild contracts were at a standstill for want of that which they had set out to destroy—capital.

This brings us to the offer of Messrs. Mactaggart, which is intended to enable Guild contracts to be completed, but again involves utilisation of that which they set out to destroy—capital.

In all of which there is nothing that any one trained in any industry, and especially the building industry, could not have foretold at the very outset. For no undertaking which involves payment to others for any period of time before any return on the outlay may be expected is possible without a substantial capital reserve. And in building operations, which, besides regular weekly payments to operatives, necessitate, to be successful, prompt payments for materials and the execution of some considerable portion of the undertaking before any return may be reasonably expected, this reserve is vital. This reserve, whether owned by a corporation or an individual, is capital, which is a fact which no amount of vituperation can gainsay.

Therefore, it would seem, when, in January, 1920, the Building Guild began in Manchester, exhorting all "who by

brain or pen or voice bear their part in the struggle" to overthrow the capitalist master, that they overlooked this essential; and also that, though the possession of capital brought the mastery of the employer the lack thereof enforced upon the Guildsmen a bondage of debt far less endurable involving the mastery of the Official Receiver.

Nevertheless, tainted though the ideals of the Guildsmen may have been by the baleful effect of socialistic visions, yet the ideal was there—an ideal for which everyone who has the true interests of industry at heart must feel a sympathy; no one, least of all a master builder, belonging as he does to one of the most competitive of industries, could be found to extend anything but a hearty welcome to any competitor who entered the race upon the same conditions as himself; but when such idealism necessitates the payment of full rates for doing nothing during wet weather and during sickness in a climate like ours, and also demands preferential terms of contract, the *bona fide* builder may be forgiven for feeling aggrieved.

So that the public generally, and the master builder in particular, will regard with equanimity the announcement that the Building Guilds are to be resuscitated, provided they now enter the field as competitors upon an equal footing, if they throw aside the nightmare of Socialism, and declare themselves openly as capitalists, and if they are to abide by like conditions to those by which their competitors in the industry are bound. Also the information will be awaited with interest as to whether the Guild contracts under Messrs. Mactaggart are to be carried on according to Guild idealism or under the commercially sound and paying system known now for centuries as the capitalistic system.

## A NOTABLE REGIONAL CONFERENCE.

Regional planning is making notable headway in England due largely to the initiative of Mr. George L. Pepler of the Town Planning Division of the Ministry of Health who has played a most important part in developing this movement.

What was evidently a most successful and inspiring conference to consider regional problems was that held at Manchester recently. This conference was notable not only in the high quality of the papers discussed in connection with it, but in the extraor-



dinarily interesting Exhibition that was part of it and the degree to which public interest in the question of town planning manifested itself.

The Proceedings of this Conference will shortly be published. Copies can be obtained upon application to the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, 3 Gray's Inn Place, Gray's Inn, London, W. C. 1, England, price 5 shillings.

## THE PROGRESS OF TOWN PLANNING IN ENGLAND.

Although compulsory Town Planning schemes must under the Town Planning Act be prepared by the year 1926 for all undeveloped areas of communities containing 20,000 or more population, at the present time the greater part of England and Wales is a blank so far as co-ordinated Town Planning is concerned.

A really notable achievement, however, is that by which 12 groups of communities have combined their separate Town Planning work into broad regional schemes as follows: In the region of Northumbria there are 3 groups of local government areas that have already gotten together and are working out a joint Town Planning scheme. These are (1) North Tyneside, (2) South Tyneside, and (3) South Tees-side.

The Yorkshire region contains two groups: (4) Doncaster, and (5) Rotherham. Lancastria also contains two: (6) The Manchester District and (7) Wirral Peninsula; The East Midlands contains but one: (8) Mansfield. In North Wales there is also one (9) Deeside, while the Home Counties or London area has three areas where town planning schemes are being prepared: (10) West Middlesex and (11) North-East Surrey and (12) also the Thames Valley scheme or North-West Surrey.

This practical example of community action should prove an inspiration to other countries to go and do likewise.

## BATHROOMS IN NEW HOUSES.

Interesting information as to the types of houses erected under the Government-aided housing schemes in England are constantly coming to light.

Not long ago in answer to a parliamentary question the Minister of Health reported that 90% of the houses in the schemes

which the government had approved were provided with separate bathrooms and in only a small number of the houses was the bath placed in the scullery. When one considers how fixed the custom in England was prior to the war to provide only a scullery bath in working-class accommodations, it is at once realized how notable an advance has been made in the living accommodations of the English people through the new Government houses.

Similarly interesting facts were given at the same time with relation to the accommodations provided in the new Government houses. Out of the total of 165,586 houses for which estimates had been approved at that time, the following accommodations were provided :

ACCOMMODATIONS PROVIDED	No. OF HOUSES
Living room, scullery, and 2 bedrooms	3,092
Living room, scullery, and 3 bedrooms	61,454
Living room, scullery, and 4 bedrooms	331
Parlor, living room, scullery, and 2 bedrooms	659
Parlor, living room, scullery, and 3 bedrooms	94,691
Parlor, living room, scullery, and 4 bedrooms	5,359

## PROGRESS AT WELWYN.

The development of Welwyn Garden City continues to progress satisfactorily. Recently the Welwyn Rural District Council, after having completed its first 50 houses, determined to build 100 houses under the pre-war Acts, that is, with the aid of Government loans but without any subsidy, it having been demonstrated that if houses could be built at a cost of £300 per house it would be possible to rent them at rents that would cover all charges and involve no subsidy from local taxes. Plans for these houses are now being prepared and if it is found practicable to build them at a price of £300 per house their construction will go forward at an early date.

Work has commenced on the construction of the first County Council School which will provide accommodations for 400 children and will be in a light form of construction so as to be readily adaptable to changing educational needs. A social hall has recently been formally opened as an adjunct to this school, this being intended for both educational and social purposes and being the gift of a public-spirited woman. Extensive house building has recently taken place at Welwyn Garden City and the appearance of many parts of the estate has been completely transformed dur-

ing the summer. Factory development has begun with the erection of offices and works for the manufacture of machinery. Work has also been begun on the first section of the permanent reservoirs necessitated by the rapid increase of Welwyn's population. Very important road constructional work is also going on, and altogether Welwyn seems to be booming.

## IDEAL CITIES.

Ideal cities always have had a fascination for every one—the more ideal they are the greater has been the fascination. Mr. William Haywood in a recent series of lectures on Town Planning at Birmingham University referred to some of the leading examples of these in the past. Speaking of ideal cities he said:

Ideas of that class were not new. Even omitting those of the ancient world, there were More and Campanella in the sixteenth century; Andreae and Swift, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and Bellamy, Butler and Morris, in the nineteenth century—all writing of Utopias. Robert Owen, in 1818, bought 1,200 acres of land and actually began an ideal village, but accomplished little of importance; and in 1848, James S. Buckingham published a remarkable scheme for a small model city, which was curiously like that for an imaginary "Christianopolis," published in 1619 by Andreae, except for certain natural differences due to two centuries of change.

Sir Titus Salt carried to completion a notable experiment when he built Saltaire, in 1853; but it was with the work of practical idealists like the late George Cadbury and Lord Leverhulme, whose ideas materialised in 1887-8, that the first practical results of earlier speculations and trials were carried to a really convincing conclusion.

## GEORGE CADBURY.

The cause of improved housing all the world over has lost a great friend in the recent death of George Cadbury. No one who came within the personal influence of his sweet reasonableness will ever forget his personality. A Quaker and head of a great choco-



late works near Birmingham, Mr. Cadbury was a pioneer in the movement for better housing in England.

Before Garden Cities or Garden Suburbs had even been talked about or thought of Mr. Cadbury began the development at Bournville, on the outskirts of Birmingham in connection with his chocolate factory, of what was to prove the precursor of England's great housing developments. It would be hard to estimate the debt that England owes to Mr. Cadbury for the public spirited work that he has carried on through all these years and the far-reaching effect it has had in influencing other employers of labor all over the world to consider the living conditions of their working people as of paramount importance.

There are probably housing schemes which have been developed since Bournville that from the housing point of view hold more of interest, but there are few enterprises in any country that can compare with the spirit of Bournville; for, Mr. Cadbury succeeded to an unusual degree in breathing into the various enterprises that have become a part of the life of this community his own spirit of fair-mindedness and consideration for others.

While Bournville has always been notable for the ideal conditions under which its workers live, it has been even more notable for the extraordinary opportunities for recreation that have been developed there. There is probably no similar industrial enterprise in the world where the recreational opportunities of the workers will be found developed to so extraordinary a degree as they are at Bournville.

Mr. Cadbury by no means limited his interest in better housing merely to the housing of his own employees. From its initiation he was interested in the development of Letchworth and supported the Garden City Movement from its beginning.

Almost coincident with the news of his death comes the announcement of a new philanthropic trust which Mr. Cadbury has given to the workers in his employ, a vast sum being left to them for their mutual benefit. Singularly enough there has recently been issued a most informative document entitled "Bournville Housing" a pamphlet of 52 pages in which the Bournville housing schemes, both of the Cadbury Bros., Ltd., and of the Bournville Village Trust, are fully described. All students of industrial housing should obtain a copy of this important document. It will repay most careful scrutiny.

## RECONSTRUCTION OF DUBLIN.

While to the unprejudiced American observer it would seem premature to be making plans for the physical reconstruction of Dublin until a more stable period of political reconstruction has been reached, it appears that there are optimistic citizens in that city who have not felt that it was too early to be making plans for the reconstruction of their city.

A private exhibition of plans for the reconstruction of Dublin prepared by a committee of citizens of that city was recently shown in Edinburgh. Mr. F. C. Mears, the architect, is chiefly responsible for the scheme but it is stated that there are associated with him a number of town planners of international reputation as well as several well-known Irish engineers and architects who are acting together as a committee of experts. The whole scheme has been considered by a citizens' organization with the definite plan of having a comprehensive plan worked out available for the Free State Government when the country has become more settled politically.

The scheme comprises the erection of a central railway station in place of the numerous existing stations. Near this there is to be a national postoffice on the site of the ruined Custom House, thus eliminating the heavy cost and delay in cartage of postal matter. The Dublin Castle and City Hall sites are to be utilized for future Courts of Justice and a National Cathedral standing side by side on the highest piece of ground in the heart of the commercial city. The site of the new Parliament House it has been suggested should be on the high plateau now occupied by the Military Hospital at Kilmainham.

The citizens of Dublin are to be congratulated on their far-sighted wisdom in thus planning for the new Dublin.

## INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION AT GOTHENBURG.

Announcement is just made of a great International Garden Cities and Town Planning Exhibition to be held in Gothenburg, Sweden, from July 28th to August 12th, in connection with the 300th Anniversary of the existence of the Town of Gothenburg. At the same time it is expected that the International Garden Cities & Town Planning Federation will hold from August 1st to

7th, the Annual Conference which was to have been held at Rome last fall and which had to be postponed, owing to the political situation in Italy at that time.

The Exhibition will be held under the patronage of H. R. H., the Crown Prince, and a representative Board of Directors comprising representatives of the architectural profession with other technical groups as well as representative business men. The preparation of the Exhibition is in charge of an Executive Committee of which Mr. Albert Lilienberg, Chief Engineer of the Town Planning Department of Gothenburg is Chairman. A Jury of Awards for the Exhibition has been chosen and contains in its membership in addition to Mr. Lilienberg, Mr. Raymond Unwin of England.

#### THE EXHIBITION WILL COMPRISE:

##### A. Historical Plans

##### B. Illustrative Plans

##### 1. Town Planning

- a. Regional and Zoning Plans
- b. Traffic problems
- c. Local plans and schemes
- d. Town planning details

##### 2. Manner of building and house types in connection with town planning.

##### 3. Garden Cities.

##### 4. Cemeteries.

##### 5. Parks, Play-grounds and sport places.

##### 6. Village Gardens.

##### 7. The building of streets and street conduits.

##### C. Literature

No fees for space in this Town Planning Exhibition will be charged and the authorities are now negotiating seeking to secure free transportation charges from the United States and back on all exhibits for this purpose.

It is hoped that the material desired may be secured in time so as to be available for a travelling exhibition to be collected under



the auspices of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation to be shown in Gothenburg and afterwards to become the property of the Federation.

Town Planners, Architects and Zoning Consultants in the United States desiring to exhibit their work at this interesting Exposition should immediately get in touch with:

Mr. Albert Lilienberg,  
Chief Engineer,  
Town Planning Department,  
Gothenburg, Sweden.

Students of housing and town planners and architects who are planning to spend their vacation in Europe in the summer of 1923, will find it advantageous to so arrange their plans as to be able to attend this most interesting Conference and Exhibition.

Any person contemplating sending an exhibit to this Exhibition can obtain further details with reference to it at the offices of the National Housing Association, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.

## INTERNATIONAL HOUSING MEETING AT BRUSSELS.

Announcement has just been received from Senator Emile Vinck of Brussels and an active member of the Executive Committee of the International Housing Congress to the effect that the International Housing Congress which was to have held its meeting at Rome last September will hold the next International Housing Conference at Brussels in the first week of August of this year.

It is expected that a departure will be made at this conference from the procedure usually followed at most conferences. Instead of the delegates being asked to listen to the reading of papers which have already been printed and distributed, there will be instead an informal discussion of certain stated propositions, as for example, the following:

1. What Has Been Done and What Ought to be Done for Housing the Poorest Elements of the Population?
2. What Has Been Accomplished by Private Initiative and What May be Further Expected from It?
3. What Has Been Accomplished by Governmental Aid and What May be Expected of it and How Should it be Organized?

It is expected that the *Union Des Villes Belges* will probably organize during the week before the Conference a trip intended to show what has been accomplished since the war in the devastated regions of Belgium and what has been constructed in the way of low-cost dwellings during the three years which will have elapsed since the close of the war.

American students of housing and town planning will thus have an opportunity to combine with their visit to Gothenburg and attendance at the International Garden Cities & Town Planning Federation meeting, a trip to Brussels and attendance at the International Housing Congress as the dates of the two meetings will undoubtedly be worked out in harmony so as to make this possible.

## INTERNATIONAL GARDEN CITIES CONFERENCE AT PARIS.

The *International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association* of which Ebenezer Howard is Président and H. Chapman, Secretary, recently held an important conference in Paris in cooperation with the French section, *l'Association Française pour l'Étude de l'Aménagement et de l'Extension des Villes*. The Conference was held at the headquarters of the Institute of Urban History, Geography and Economy, 29 Rue de Sevigné.

Beside presenting the usual routine business of such Conferences and of the International Association, a large part of the week's Conference was taken up with visits to various groups of low-cost dwellings and Garden Suburbs in the neighborhood of Paris.

Among the housing developments visited were the following constructed by the City of Paris, those at *Avenue Emile Zola*, those of *l'Office d'Habitations à bon Marché* in the *rue de l'Ourcq*; also the houses of the Rothschild and Lebaudy Foundations in the *rue Marcadet-Championnet* and *rue de la Bidassoa*, as well as the buildings of *le Société La Sécurité* and *Le Progrès* and the Cheap Dwellings Society of the 16th District located in the *Boulevard Bessières* and *rue Boileau*, respectively.

The Garden Suburbs and Villages included the developments of the *Département de la Seine* at Arcueil-Cachan, Dugny and Nanterre; as well as the similar developments of *l'Office d'Habitations à bon marché du Département* at Suresnes, Plessis-Robinson, Malabry, Champigny, les Lilas, Drancy, Stains and Gennevilliers,

as well as those of private organizations at Charentonneau and Villeneuve-St. Georges.

One of the interesting trips was a visit to the walls around Paris forming the old fortifications which are now being torn down and new housing developments and recreation grounds being developed in their place.

In addition to these visits to housing developments and Garden Villages, the delegates were also given an opportunity of studying ancient town planning as exemplified at Versailles, St. Cloud and other places near Paris. The Conference wound up with a visit to Rheims where the new town plans were studied.

The Conference was extremely well attended, delegates and members being present from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, France, Great Britain, Holland, Ireland, New South Wales, Spain, Sweden and Victoria. Mr. Ebenezer Howard was unanimously re-elected President. Among those elected to the office of Vice-President were the following: Australia, Mr. John Sulman; Belgium, Senator Vinck; Denmark, Mr. J. Chr. Yensen, M. P.; France, M. Louis Bonnier; Great Britain, Lord Robert Cecil; Norway, Mr. Ch. Gierloff; Holland, Dr. P. H. Berlage; Sweden, Baron Palmstierna; United States, Mr. C. D. Norton.

The name of the organization was changed from International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association to "Federation" and Mr. H. Chapman was re-elected Secretary. Five new members of the Council were elected in the persons of Thomas Adams, Sir Theodore Chambers, Mr. G. M. Harris, Mr. C. B. Purdom, and Dr. Erik Sjostrand. Mr. G. M. Harris was elected Chairman of the Council and Mr. Raymond Unwin, Treasurer, and Mr. C. B. Purdom, Honorary Secretary. The following Executive Committee was chosen: Messrs. A. Bruggeman, Ch. Gierloff, G. M. Harris, D. Hudig, Adolph Otto, C. B. Purdom, Henri Sellier, Dr. Erik Sjostrand, Senator Vinck, and J. Chr. Yensen, M. P.

The papers presented at the Conference will be printed and published in the near future. While no final decision has been reached as to the time and place of the next conference, we understand that there is every likelihood of its being held at Gothenburg, Sweden, during the first two weeks of August.



## THE HOUSING CRISIS IN PARIS.

### *LA CRISE DU LOGEMENT.*

What is perhaps the most important contribution of the year to the literature of housing is the recently published work of M. Henri Sellier, entitled "The Housing Shortage and Public Aid to Housing". Published in four large volumes containing a total of 1,250 pages, fully illustrated with maps, photographs and plans, it contains not only a thorough discussion of all phases of the problem in France, but also outlines the situation in some 18 other countries in a very complete manner.

Never until now has it been possible for French students of the housing problem to find all this material gathered within the confines of a single book. All previous studies had been concerned either with only one particular phase of the problem, or had been of strictly local application; whereas the present work undertakes to set forth the entire problem in its proper historic, economic and social frame-work.

M. Sellier begins by demonstrating the immediate need for more and better houses, and then considers the various proposed methods of securing them, and outlines what has been done in other countries. The first part of the book deals more specifically with present conditions in the city of Paris; its overcrowded and unsanitary slums are graphically described, and the effect of these conditions on public health and on the birth-rate is made clear by means of numerous tables and illustrations.

In the second part the author takes up the various solutions of the problem which have been proposed. Without attempting here more than to glance at the contents of these interesting pages, we remark in passing that the conclusion reached is that under present conditions in France both private initiative and subsidized private effort have failed to make any substantial improvement in the situation.

He then explains the methods and the work of the *Office Public d'Habitation à Bon Marché*, which, he believes, is the best available agency for accomplishing the great work of providing homes. As an illustration of what can be done by this type of public "intervention" the activities of the *Office* of the Department of the Seine are explained in full.

Then follows a wide survey of efforts in other countries. Espe-

cial attention is given to England, where the policy adopted is more easily studied because of the unified national character of the efforts to find a solution, and because public opinion there is better prepared than elsewhere to understand the necessity of building without delay and according to a definite plan. A detailed study is given of the famous developments at Letchworth, Port Sunlight, Bournville, etc., with comments as to processes and results which are well worth studying in other countries. The civic movement in the United States is examined in a general way and it is shown that, here too, decentralization and the creation of Garden Cities is considered the best remedy for overcrowding.

While there is no doubt that much of the experience of any one country has but small lesson value outside that country; it is also true that there are certain great general principles everywhere the same which apply to the housing problem the world over. These M. Sellier has brought out in a way that makes this, his latest and most elaborate work, sure to be appreciated by all those who in every country are united in their belief that every family has a right to healthful home surroundings.

## A GARDEN SUBURB FOR PARIS AT ARCUEIL.

That the excellent illustrative possibilities of government housing have not blinded observers in France to its limitations, is made clear by an article which recently appeared in the *Paris Journal* describing the *Cité-Jardin* at Arcueil, in the Department of the Seine. It says:

Government intervention will certainly never solve the housing shortage, but it is proper to give credit for the efforts which have been made almost everywhere in France by public authorities to allay as rapidly as possible a part at least of the dangers of the situation.

The Department of the Seine was authorized by a special law in August, 1922, to build temporary houses up to 25 million francs, the national government agreeing to meet one half of the expense, with the remarkable result that within 18 months there have been created, at Arcueil, at Nanterre and at Dugny, three new little cities, as pretty, as healthful and as comfortable as can be.

The law says temporary, but future occupants need have no fear on this score; in France temporary things last a long while. The average life of each of these houses is officially figured at 50 years! And everything has been done as if these towns were intended to last forever.

These little cottages, finished in stucco of various light tints, after the manner of Dutch and Flemish houses, are arranged in accordance with the same principles as the Garden Villages near London which are known the world over. They are all set back 10 feet from the sidewalk, so as to allow for little gardens or lawns and each house is provided with a vegetable garden completely hidden from the view of passers-by.

There are 3 types of houses, but the majority contain a kitchen and 4 bed-rooms. All are provided with gas, electricity, running water and sewer connections. The plans as drawn called for 224 houses but for financial reasons these had to be limited to 150. The rent will vary between 1,008 and 1,310 francs per year, with special subsidies to families having 4 or more children. Such families also have first preference among applicants.

At the present time the total result of the efforts in this direction of the city of Paris and the Department of the Seine may be figured at a total of 13,000 houses, sheltering in all 80,000 people. It is evident that this effort alone can never solve the problem. Private initiative must come to the rescue. Will the measures now being undertaken to encourage it succeed?

## BUILDING BY VOLUNTEER LABOR IN FRANCE.

A solution of the housing problem, which if not practical is at least novel and interesting, has been brought forward in France. It is in the form of a proposition recently put before the Municipal Council of Paris by one of its members, M. Roéland.

After some general remarks on the housing shortage and on the increase in cost of material and labor, M. Roéland places in evidence a table based on figures furnished to him by an organization of architects which shows that 51% of the cost of the house goes for labor and 49% for raw materials. These figures, he claims, indicate at once a simple means of cutting the cost of build-



ing in two by eliminating entirely the first item; and of reducing it perhaps still further by wholesale purchase of materials.

"This result" says M. Roéland, "could be obtained without in any way hurting the interests of workers, employers or landowners. All that is needed is for every citizen of working age to offer every day one half hour of his time for the public good. Architects, contractors, etc., would be employed at their specialties, as would also the skilled laborers; laymen such as myself would be employed as unskilled labor under the direction of the others. The daily half hours could be grouped each week or fortnight, and this labor would be directed exclusively to the building of dwellings for the community."

The sponsor of this unique idea then proceeds to the calculation of the amount and efficiency, or rather inefficiency, of the manpower that would thus be available and assures us that after all allowances are made this would result in an important contribution to the supply of housing and would even permit the work of slum clearance to be taken up effectively.

We are not informed as to what action the Municipal Council took on this proposition. It is probable that the many difficulties that at once suggest themselves, such as the probably unfavorable attitude of Labor in the construction industry, and the great difficulty of organizing and supervising, have caused the other councillors to hesitate considerably.

## THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN FRANCE.\*

If one considers merely the number of Societies for Cheap Housing, the progress of the housing movement in France seems not to have been appreciably affected by the war. On the 1st of January 1914 there were 410 such Societies; on the 1st of Janu-

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\*So clear a statement of the housing situation as it exists in France today and the various agencies that have been created to cope with the housing situation, is found in this article by Mr. Cernesson, published in *La Grande Revue* under the title of "Cheap Houses After the War", that we are reprinting it in full for the benefit of our readers. We are indebted to Mr. John J. Murphy, former Tenement House Commissioner of New York City, for its translation. While the article in some points is not strictly accurate where it refers to matter within the knowledge of the editor, the article is so excellent on the whole that we have felt it wise to reprint it here for the benefit of our readers.—Editor.

ary 1921 there were 474. The number of Co-operative Societies similarly grew from 258 to 281, and the number of Incorporated Societies from 152 to 193. In addition to these there are the five Foundations, the most important of which are due to the Rothschild Bros. and to Madame Lebaudy; these have not been increased in number. The capital of all the Societies amounts to 140,000,000 francs; that of the Foundations is nearly 44,000,000 francs.

But these figures do not throw an accurate light on the situation. Leaving out of consideration the devastated regions, the pre-war Societies, even those most firmly established, have to a large extent ceased operations on account of the excessive cost of materials and labor. Those which have been able to finish buildings commenced before the war have used up their reserves, and those Societies organized since the war have been compelled to let their small capital lie dormant.

And this is not all. The Moratorium law for tenants has operated disastrously upon these unfortunate Societies for Cheap Housing. The diminution of their revenues has been all the more appreciable, because these Societies have not been able to increase their rentals, which have remained what they were before the war. In addition, notwithstanding their favorable situation, the great majority of tenants, many of whom could have paid without difficulty, have taken advantage of the Moratorium to receive the double advantage assured to them by the unselfish attitude of the Societies and the general legislation on rentals.

There is nothing astonishing, therefore, in the fact that the best Societies, even a model organization like that of Bordeaux, even a Co-operative Society as well managed as that of *Villeneuve-Saint Georges*, have decided not to continue building; and even the Foundations themselves, which have such solid financial standing, have been unfavorably affected by the crisis. To appreciate fully the present situation it is important to understand the difference between these three forms of activity for the provision of cheap housing: Incorporated Societies, Co-operative Societies and Foundations.

### THE INCORPORATED SOCIETIES.

The Incorporated Societies organized by men of large business affairs, captains of industry, are operated for the benefit of the

working class but without their co-operation. Those who manage them do not expect to realize any personal profit, nor to benefit personally from any of the buildings which they construct. Their resources are big enough; their shares of stock are often from 500 to 1,000 francs. In case of need they have no difficulty in securing loans. The cost of operation is usually low, because many of the tasks of caring for these buildings are performed without cost.

Their management is much sought after, because the administrators have plenty of leisure time; and finally these administrators, precisely because they themselves practise habits of sanitary living, tend to introduce them into the buildings which they construct. The working class profits from improvements which they are not able to introduce for themselves, and as a class, they do not as a rule even have the idea of introducing them. It is in this spirit that the Society of Bordeaux in addition to its bathing equipment, has built its 12 groups which comprise 143 individual houses, each with a yard and a garden.

The operation of the Co-operative Societies is in theory similar to that of the Incorporated Societies, but, leaving out of consideration the difficulties which they meet in their organization, their lack of capital imposes on all their construction activity a slowness which appreciably diminishes their utility. Their shares of stock are only from 50 to 100 francs, and the smallness of their resources permits the construction of a very small number of houses, which are allotted in turn to their members by means of drawing lots. Their general costs are higher since their members have less leisure and less technical knowledge than the administrators of the Incorporated Societies; considerations of comfort and health do not count for so much with them, because their necessity is not keenly realized and because they cannot afford to make costly experiments.

Both Incorporated and Co-operative Societies construct two sorts of habitations, block dwellings or tenements and individual houses. Usually the individual house is sold. It is generally constructed by the Incorporated Societies according to an agreed plan and by the Co-operative Societies under an agreement between the administrator and the member of the Society, who come to an understanding on a plan that shall be mutually acceptable.

The purchaser binds himself to pay down as a guarantee one



fifth of the total value and pays his mortgage by annual installments over a period of 20 years. Through the whole of this period he enjoys for the most part the rights of proprietorship; when his last payment is completed he becomes the definite owner.

Before the war the price of a house in a town like Bordeaux was on the average 7,000 francs; such a house could be purchased by annual payment of from 413 to 550 francs. Today this sum must be trebled, but the individual home which is thus sold, although it realizes a certain ideal, cannot be taken as the exclusive type of workman's dwelling in France. It is only possible for the workman or the small tradesman of fixed residence. In the large cities especially, the construction of large block dwellings containing apartments for rent for the floating population is quite necessary. A controlling factor in determining the type of dwelling is the price of land; it is so high in the large cities that it compels the building of 3, 4 and 5 story buildings as an economic necessity.

### THE HOUSING FOUNDATIONS.

The Foundation differentiates itself from both of the Societies before mentioned by the fact that it is not the work of a group, but of a single philanthropist. At this point we come to the total disappearance of collective effort to improve housing conditions, which excites so lively an interest among the administrators of the Incorporated Societies and the members of the Co-operative Societies.

With the Foundations it is a case of a single generous person for the realization of his own views, donating a considerable fund to a social purpose. Under this plan the beneficiaries who seldom get together receive from this method few benefits of social education. Enjoying such advantages as they receive, without feeling themselves associated in working together towards the whole, they tend naturally to think of themselves solely as tenants, and confine themselves strictly to their rights without bothering their heads as to the misfortunes which in times of crisis may attack the Foundations. In fact, the tenants of these Foundations, during and after the war, were among those who insisted most bitterly and unreasonably on their rights under the Moratorium.

Nevertheless, the material advantages of the Foundations are infinitely superior to those of the Societies. Their resources are

large. There is no danger involved in the investment, as the demand for homes is always ten times the supply. Each year, in normal times, the net profits on the rentals average from 3 to 4% of the value of the improvements which is added to the original capital instead of being divided among the stockholders as in the case of the Societies. Thus for a Foundation like that of Madame Lebaudy, which was originally 16,000,000 francs the annual revenue would be 480,000 francs. It would be 300,000 francs for the Rothschild Foundation. With such a revenue, at the end of a short time a new building can be constructed; at the end of a short period of years, the revenue being increased by the increase of the number of buildings, it will not be one but two buildings that can be constructed.

There is between the Societies and the Foundations the difference between simple and compound interest. For, the Societies with a capital remaining practically stationary can only construct when the amortization payments have restored a sufficient fraction of the original investment, while the capital of the Foundations grows indefinitely and may be doubled at the end of 20 years.

Nor is this all. We said that the Incorporated Societies were more likely than the Co-operative Societies to construct comfortable and healthful buildings, because more than the working class, they realize the need for comfort and health and because they are less restricted in their means. Nevertheless, they are compelled to move within very narrow limits, they can hardly ever make experiments or view things with too liberal an eye.

On the other hand, the Foundations are not checked by lack of resources nor by the opposition of stockholders. With complete freedom of action they can plan new improvements, execute them in the new building which is erected each year, studying the success or the failure of this or that innovation. Whatever happens they will have risked only a small reduction in their large revenue.

Even the growth of these revenues is not their only and absorbing consideration. Their great concern is not merely the creation of an additional supply of housing but the general well-being of their tenants. They may come to the aid of a society for social services and communal activities. They are vitally interested in being able to maintain in each of these vast buildings, in which a population comparable to that of a large village often resides, cleanliness and an attractive exterior.

How can they do this if the garbage is allowed to remain in the yards, and clothes are permitted to be dried from the windows as in that sordid house of the "Golden Drop" described by Zola in "L'Assommoir". How can they preserve cleanliness on the stairs, in the yards, the interior gardens, if children away from the control of their parents, who are out working, fill them with their cries, disfigure the walls and soil them; and if, for lack of room, boxes, baggage, bicycles and rubbish of all sorts are permitted to encumber or defile them.

Where, however, there is a laundry or drying room, a play space for small children, study rooms for girls and boys, a domestic science school, garages for bicycles and baby carriages, a system of gas and electric light, an automatic system for the removal of garbage, most of the disagreeable features of communal living disappear. A single janitor is sufficient to maintain order, and, in the long run by dint of submitting to these regulations and enjoying the benefits of them, the working population feels its well-being increased without its having to increase its expenses. Its social education develops under these circumstances into a sentiment of higher self-respect.

The buildings of the Rothschild Foundation and the Lebaudy Foundation have been constructed with this idea in mind. They are relatively recent, dating from 1904 to 1906. The initial capital of each was about 10,000,000 francs. It is now 16,000,000 in one case and 20,000,000 in the other. Besides the services described above, the newest buildings built by the Rothschild Foundation, especially those in the Rue de Prague, the Rue Bargue, and the Rue Championnet, furnish motive power in the workrooms and are provided with a medical dispensary and also with a common kitchen where housekeepers returning home late may cook their meals.

The War did not interrupt the operation of the Rothschild and Lebaudy Foundations. One can easily see that in buildings where the highest rental for an apartment of 4 to 5 rooms is 540 francs a year there is never a vacancy. As each new building is constructed 10,000 to 15,000 applications are received.

#### AT A STAND-STILL.

But all new construction is now stopped. The Rothschild Foundation was able only with the greatest difficulty to finish its



fifth building which cost several million francs more than was expected and nearly exhausted the available capital. As in the case of the Incorporated Societies, revenue has been much diminished and the present outlook is most discouraging. Up to the time of the war, the fortunate tenants of these social dwellings lived in perfect harmony with the management, appreciated the service rendered, and demonstrated a certain thankfulness to the people who had established the Foundation. At the present time many of them, comfortably installed in a favored situation, no longer see in the management anything but an ordinary proprietorship and regard themselves as injured when the payment of their rent is asked, regardless of the stoppage of the undertakings which have helped them to leave their unhealthy homes and of the sad loss to those who are still compelled to occupy similar residences, in the hope that in the near future some new ones may be built.

Consequently to a large degree the construction of Cheap Dwellings has stopped. Before the war, in this important field the activity of public spirited propagandists had been able to make only a slight impression. Now we face a situation in which this lamentable state of affairs has been aggravated by the general shortage of housing.

In this matter of housing, as in every social question, all classes are involved. The influx of the "new rich", who invaded all the luxurious and even the merely comfortable apartments has resulted in driving the former middle class tenants into lower class homes; and ultimately it drove into undesirable apartments that part of the working class, which had been used to a certain degree of comfort and finally drove the less well-to-do workers into shelters which do not deserve the name of homes.

The slums, the only places available for these last, have resumed a sinister prestige; yet the poor are almost happy to be able to find even these poor abodes. The miserable huts in the outskirts of the city, repainted by ingenious landlords, are the best locations which these poor people can afford; in a word, it is at the very moment when the construction of moderate priced houses should be increased that the Societies and Foundations have become paralyzed.

The situation then is very grave. The wonder is that it has not caused more disorder. Is the fact that it has not done so a matter

of congratulation? It would, perhaps, have been better to see the slum deserted for the street than for the wine-shop; the street was sometimes heroic, the wine-shop never was.

Whatever may be the cause of it, we are living in one of those atmospheres in which no government in Europe feels itself entirely secure. Under the powerful influence of this uneasiness the State has shown a vague consciousness of new responsibilities. It has felt that in face of this suffering population, which for many reasons is incapable of providing a remedy for its own troubles, and in the face of the insufficiency of spontaneous initiative, it could not remain, with all deference to the individualist ideal, an indifferent spectator of isolated and unrelated attempts at a solution, and these paralyzed by poverty of resources and insuperable obstacles.

It has begun to understand that the safety of the nation itself is at stake; that this condition justifies and demands exceptional measures and that it is the duty of the State to stimulate dormant initiative, to arouse individual generosity and to furnish a large part of the financial backing needed.

### OFFICIAL ACTION.

With this object in mind the State has attempted first to multiply and revive organizations already created or encouraged by pre-war laws. These were "*Comités de patronage*, 1906" and "*Offices publics d'Habitations à Bon Marché*, 1912". Let us review, for clearness of understanding, the nature of their respective tasks. *Les Comités de patronage* do not intervene either in construction or in the matter of lending financial aid to construction. Their function is essentially one of moral encouragement to help out existing Societies to make recommendations to the State, and to lend their aid in obtaining advances of funds. They have no budget of their own so that it has been possible to compel their establishment in practically all political divisions.

The Building and Loan Societies are of a different character. Originally created by private initiative, when they have secured capital of 100,000 francs of which one fourth must have been invested, they can obtain advances from the State at a rate of 2% from a fund of 200,000,000 francs created for the benefit of such Societies under the form of loans, provided the borrowers have contributed one-fifth of the cost of their future dwelling, these loans being granted for a period of 20 to 40 years at a rate of 2½ to 3%.

The public authorities for Cheap Housing are official bodies created by decree, on the application of a general council of a commune or group of communes. Their sole object is the construction, management and operation of sanitary dwellings, or the improvement of existing houses and the creation of Garden Villages. Their function is essentially an active one and they cannot operate without a budget. Their resources are furnished by compulsory grant voted by the Department or the Commune, and also through gifts or bequests which they may receive. Once organized, they may receive from the State loans at 2 to 2½% out of a total fund of 300,000,000 francs, this fund being distinct from the 200,000,000 before mentioned. The Law of 1919 decided that the amount to be loaned might increase to 85% and 60% of the value of the improvement depending upon whether it was guaranteed by the Department or the Commune.

Out of a third special fund the State grants a subvention equal to one third the value of the house to be constructed by those living in it. This subvention of one third is not money lent but money given.

The State hopes that the authorities will stimulate general initiative and make up for the inadequacy of existing Societies by pushing their propaganda, encouraging them by example and by the attention that their physical activity will bring to the work of cheap housing. By mandatory circulars the Ministry of Labor has directed Prefects to demand of General Councils and Municipal Councils that they perform their duty in this respect. Up to March 1921 there existed 81 of these *Offices*, 30 of which were departmental, 2 provincial and 49 communal. The richest of these are those of the *Seine* with 27,000,000 francs, the *Seine-et-Oise*, 3,000,000, and a number of others which have a fund of 100,000 francs or more.

As a matter of fact, these authorities have not produced up to the present time appreciable results. The Authority of the *Seine* has acquired 5 tracts containing not over 200 acres on which tenements and individual houses have been begun. In about 15 of the communes remodelled buildings have been finished and in some temporary houses erected. Outside of Paris about 12 departmental *Offices* and 13 communal *Offices* have shown activity, but most of them have not got beyond the period of making surveys. Some sites have been acquired. The *Havre Office* appears to be



the only one which has so far pushed matters to completion, with 2 buildings comprising 240 apartments.

This appalling slowness, we must recognize, is not solely due to the inherent difficulties caused by the high cost of materials and labor. It is the consequence of universal ignorance in the matter of social legislation. All the encouragements offered are unknown to the workers and to the ignorant majority of the trades-people. That goes without saying; but it is unknown even to that active minority which would be the natural group to assist the working class with its knowledge and its control. It should also be added that this legislation does not form a consistent whole. It is an aggregate composition of a number of laws. It has instituted a series of movements affecting the most diverse objects and affecting various classes of citizens in different ways.

Under these conditions it is not a matter of surprise that even the construction of a departmental office should be a matter of extreme difficulty. It would even be impossible if the Prefect, the social council and their social colleagues pursued the vain hope of introducing into it only competent persons. They are compelled to resign themselves to providing persons of presumed competence.

When finally the authority is installed with a very confused idea of its rights and its functions, it hastens according to classical ritual to appoint a committee charged with the duty of submitting the programme. A new period of waiting then begins and the sketch of the general lines of this programme only makes more obvious how distant is the hope of realization when contrasted with the distress and need of the shelterless people.

What the departmental authority should seek first, if it does not wish to wander aimlessly, is an exact knowledge of the local needs of its districts, which should be classed in the order of their importance since only the most pressing can be met. In order to bring this inquiry to a head, it should assure itself of the co-operation of the municipal authorities and as these people will be able to furnish only most general information, it would be helpful to utilize the best qualified of the administrative staff to learn the value of the buildings of the taxpayers. The Tax Department seems to be well placed to obtain an exact census of dwellings. The individual folios of the last census should be able to help materially on the important point, namely, the number of persons living in them. These facts would indicate the size of the problem

to be solved. Unfortunately, this is asking the administration to depart from its usual functions, and to undertake a task of which it will not appreciate either the interest or the importance, and one feels the difficulty of proposing a social function to a department which has heretofore been concerned only in the matter of taxation. Hence, the authorities which up to now have proceeded along the lines of this inquiry have not dared even to knock at these hostile doors. They have contented themselves with information furnished by the Mayors or the supervisors.

Whatever may be the outcome of this inquiry, let us assume for a moment that it is fulfilled. It will be quickly seen, indeed it may be said to be already seen, that in order to meet the crisis both in rural districts and in industrial sections it would be necessary to triple or quadruple loans from the State. It is necessary then to secure other resources. As the law suggests, these may be demanded of municipal councils, savings banks and bureaus of benevolence, who are more interested in the solution than perhaps they themselves understand. For the savings banks one of the surest methods of increasing the fund of public savings which flows into their coffers, is the construction of dwellings, which will generate among the workers the contentment which arises from living in one's own house, which assures them normal and temperate living, which in turn is the sure source of savings. To the towns and charitable societies one may say that in suitable housing, rural and industrial workers become more apt to accomplish their work, to lengthen their lives and thus diminish the need for help which presses so steadily upon these associations and institutions.

It would be perhaps difficult, but not at all impossible, under the pressure of intensive propaganda, to persuade merchants and people owning property that if the new areas opened up to occupation received a reasonable share of the working-class, it will to some degree bring about the emptying of the higher class apartments and thus all have an effect indirect, but none the less certain, on the construction of cheap buildings.

### INDUSTRY'S RESPONSIBILITY.

If there is one group which is directly interested in the rapid construction of workmen's dwellings, it is the big business group.

Each manufacturer who erects a new factory or wants to increase his present capacity is obliged to construct workingmen's dwellings and thereby invest considerable capital. In place of doing this, let him address himself to the Departmental authority; let that body act for him, construct dwellings, lodge therein the families of his workmen, and other workmen if need be, and take care of all the responsibilities of management, only asking of him a periodic payment equal to a small part of the cost of the dwelling. The State will intervene finally to furnish the local authority with the balance of the necessary payment.

One particular point remains to be elaborated, that of private philanthropy. In this respect, as in others, a campaign of education must be undertaken by the authorities. Nothing is more saddening, than the endless succession of innumerable legacies, and <sup>various</sup> <sup>physical</sup> Foundations which perhaps serve interesting purposes, <sup>which</sup> <sup>which</sup> seldom have social well-being for their object. So many <sup>regions</sup> <sup>of</sup> them are merely literary or scientific, donating to museums, <sup>gr</sup> <sup>laboratories</sup>, hospitals or to public charity. The benefactors seem to have in mind nothing but the encouragement of special qualities, the consolation of exceptional misfortunes, and they turn their eyes away from the obscure masses who maintain the national life by their daily efforts under extremely bad conditions. Certainly it would be a great misfortune if science, art, old age, sickness and misery should each cease to excite private generosity, but it is not less a misfortune that private generosity should continue to direct itself exclusively to such objects.

Often it is not pure generosity which stimulates these donations, it is the desire to attach one's name to a permanent work. Often also it is in the more noble and more touching purpose of consecrating the memory of some cherished departed relative or friend. To all those who are moved by such ambition, it would be possible to show their names engraved on the front of a model workman's dwelling, their busts erected in a playground would offer as glorious a memorial as a gold inscription on the marble of a medical clinic or in the great hall room of an academy. It is by this means that in Paris the names of Rothschild, Lebaudy, Heines, are inseparably associated with their Foundations and that at Bordeaux different groups of houses of this character bear the names of Simon, Siegfried, Cheysson, Picot, conferring on all a lasting remembrance, honoring equally those whose generosity did

the work and the men whose eloquence urged them to undertake it.

The resources which can be drawn from this inexhaustible fund are enormous, and we know that the institutions which they could create are by capitalization of revenues susceptible of indefinite increase. To neglect private generosity, to leave it to fate to determine its direction would be to deprive ourselves of a powerful auxiliary which is destined perhaps not merely to make up the remainder of the fund needed, but even possibly to increase the fund tenfold.

We express the hope that the public authorities will not lose sight of any of these objectives, that they will anticipate the needs by preliminary studies and the demand for funds by active propaganda, that they will advance rapidly towards a supply of cheap housing, otherwise they will risk the postponement of a complete plan for half a century.

JOSEPH CERNESSON.

## DEATH OF A FRENCH HOUSING REFORMER.

Jules Siegfried, for many years President of the *Société des Habitations à bon Marché* died at Havre a few months ago. This is a great loss to the cause of Housing in France. M. Siegfried's name was not only associated with the movement for better housing in France, but with all movements for the civic improvement of France. His reputation was international and the loss to the housing movement from his death is a very great one.

## GRENOBLE PLANS A GARDEN VILLAGE.

Complete plans have been prepared by the Municipal Bureau for Low-cost Dwellings of the city of Grenoble for an industrial Garden Suburb. The plans call for 82 buildings containing in all 200 apartments which are to be built upon land ceded by the city. Two-thirds of the apartments will be reserved for families having more than 3 children under 16. There will be a garden for each apartment. The total cost is estimated at 7,000,000 francs, of which 1,000,000 represents the value of the land. About 2,000,000 francs will be furnished by the French Government as a subsidy. The balance of 4,000 000 francs is to be raised by loan. This is to be repaid



by annual payments of 4% of which 2½% will be interest and 1½% amortization, the money being provided by an increase in certain of the city taxes.

## FRANCE INTERESTED IN CONVENIENCES OF LIVING.

A recent dispatch from France states that the French Government has decided to open a competition among French inventors for all kinds of appliances to facilitate housework, and prizes to the amount of approximately \$2,000 are offered.

## A BUILDING GUILD FOR FRANCE.

It is reported that in response to requests by representatives of those made homeless by the War in the Devastated Regions, the *Union of Technicians in Industry, Commerce and Agriculture of France* has decided to establish a Building Guild to carry out construction work for public authorities, for municipalities and for societies of war victims. No profit is to be made by the Guild on its work, the workers to be paid only the regular salaries. It is stated that the unions in the building trades of France are coöperating in this movement.

## TURNING CARTRIDGE BOXES INTO HOMES.

After every great war the nations are supposed to return to their homes and "beat their swords into plowshares" The latest and most modern variation of this age-worn principle is found in recent news which comes to us from Germany that cartridge boxes are being turned into houses in Berlin and other German cities.

It is reported that thousands of these small boxes are lying about, unused. Some ingenious person has accordingly, because of the high cost of building materials and the great shortage of houses which exists in Germany, as elsewhere, conceived the idea of using these small boxes, filling them with clay and laying them into walls with mortar, very much as ordinary bricks would be laid. The houses resulting from this process are said to be small and only one story high but do provide accommodations for one-family in each.

## LANDLORDS GO ON STRIKE IN VIENNA.

Dispatches from Vienna received in the early summer indicated a serious situation in that city where it was reported that over 36,000 persons had at that time registered their names as applicants for dwellings with the Municipal Housing Board upon whom rests the responsibility of allotting accommodations. It was stated at that time that the number of applicants was increasing at the rate of 300 a week.

Notwithstanding this situation, Vienna not long ago imposed a heavy tax on rents from which it was expected that a revenue of 1,500,000,000 kronen a year would be received, the moneys thus received to be devoted to the construction of new dwellings to be rented without profit. This measure was strongly opposed by property owners who are already suffering from having rents limited by law and who claim that private investors would have to get 600 times the legal rate of rent in order to make it profitable for them to build houses.

Under the proposed scheme of taxation the rent tax was made payable by the tenant, the lowest rate being 100% on rents amounting to 3,000 kronen a year and increasing on a surtax basis until the maximum tax equalled 1,000% of the rent paid by the tenant.

No detailed information has been received as to how this proposed scheme of taxation has worked out in practice, but it may have figured to some extent as a factor in the "rent strike" called by the landlords of Vienna early in October. Commencing at nightfall on October 3rd, landlords throughout the city locked their front doors, turned out the lights in hallways, cut off the water and gas supplies and declared that they would from that time refuse to accept rent until the Government permitted an increase in rents comparing favorably with pre-war values.

The chief demand of the landlords is that instead of the present low rent as fixed by law, that rents should be fixed at one-eighth of the pre-war rentals in gold, which it is said would mean an increase of 2,000%, figured in Austrian paper crowns at their present value.

The landlords of Vienna organized committees throughout the city to support this movement for increased rents and at

the same time petitioned the Government to permit radical increases in the rentals, which the tenants consider unjustified and opposed at a time of shortage of foodstuffs and general high prices.

Notwithstanding the fact that the authorities threatened with heavy fines and jail sentences any landlord who carried out the intentions announced of cutting off water supply and refusing to render the services which are usually rendered, the preparations to make the strike effective were continued and carried out. It is reported that the whole city was thrown into a great state of excitement, stocks of candles were bought up, all kinds of utensils were requisitioned to bring water to the houses and preparations made as if the city were about to undergo a state of siege.

While the landlords are not putting the tenants out of the buildings, they are determined to deprive tenants of the ordinary conveniences of living as a means of bringing pressure to bear upon the public authorities to permit the charging of a rent more nearly in keeping with the needs of the situation.

## BEER AND RENTS.

An interesting sidelight on the economic aspects of Government regulation of rents is found in the statement that in Vienna there are workingmen who spend per week 50 crowns on rent and 50,000 crowns on beer. That proper returns from investment in property should be taken by authority of law from landlords and given to tenants to spend in beer does not seem wise economic, social or political policy and the ratio of 1,000 to 1, between beer and shelter in a workingman's budget certainly proposes a new principle of social economics.

## SLUM CLEARANCE IN AMSTERDAM.

An interesting account is given in a recent issue of *L'Habitation à Bon Marché* of a rehousing project recently carried out by the city of Amsterdam. The writer of this article in describing a certain section of the city writes as follows:

There, in the ugliest of surroundings was gathered a starving and sordid population. There were alleys where

the filth oozed out everywhere from the paving to the roof, where waste-water flows through surface gutters, while under the windows draped with miserable linens, crept vermin-covered children.

The idea of clearing out this mass of hovels seemed almost Utopian, but the city of Amsterdam nevertheless undertook it. With the aid of well-known architects it built a Garden Suburb at Transvaalbuurt, and actually succeeded in moving the foreign population of the "Ghetto" mentioned above, willy nilly, into these new and beautiful surroundings.

The writer rightly concludes from the success of Amsterdam in this work and the failure of private initiative elsewhere to accomplish any extensive rehousing schemes, that municipal intervention is the only way of solving the problem of slum-clearance.

## RENT LAWS A CAMPAIGN ISSUE IN POLAND.

In Poland the question of rent control legislation was one of the leading campaign issues in the national election that recently took place. Recent dispatches from Warsaw state that the Socialists made their chief platform a promise to enact a housing law forbidding landlords to increase rents or to dispossess tenants who pay regularly.

## HOUSING IN SPAIN.

Recent dispatches from Madrid report that that city, in common with the rest of the world, is suffering from high rents. It is stated that in 1910 the sum total of the rents of the city of Madrid was estimated to be about 76,000,000 pesetas a year, not including the rents of shops. In 1920 this sum had risen to 116,000,000 pesetas, or an increase of over 50%. As far back as 1910 the supply of houses was inadequate. At that time other European cities had on an average one house for from every 8 to 16 inhabitants, but Madrid had only one house for each 43 inhabitants.

It is said that Madrid's old houses are so unsanitary and overcrowded that they resemble the peasant houses in Sweden



and Denmark where cupboards are opened in the walls at bed time and where the people sleep in one large room on little shelves let down from holes in the wall. Because of the general unsanitary conditions in the living quarters of the poor it is reported that typhoid fever, typhus, and smallpox claim heavy tolls every summer.

It is not strange that with such a situation existing that the Government of Spain should have thought it wise to enact a new housing law extending Government aid, so as to stimulate the building of houses and thus catch up to some extent with the existing shortage.

### THE NEW SPANISH LAW.

The Spanish Housing Law enacted at the close of last year contains a number of interesting features. Among these may be mentioned the following:

1. Exemption from all governmental, provincial and local taxes and assessments during a period of not more than 30 years,

2. Loans from the government on first mortgage security for a term of 30 years with interest at from 2 to 3% for the building of workingmen's dwellings up to an aggregate of 100,000,000 pesetas (\$50,000,000 par), such dwellings to be acquired by the tenants within the period mentioned. Similar loans are authorized to be granted to employers for the housing of their workingmen. None of these loans is to exceed 55% of the value of the land, nor 70% of the value of the finished buildings. Loans may be made on an installment basis as the buildings progress and preferences are to be given to coöperative building societies.

3. A scheme for guaranteeing rents to landlords. The Ministry of Labor is to pay to landlords a part of the rent not exceeding one-half, and in the aggregate not exceeding 3,000,000 pesetas yearly, the purpose of this subsidy being to enable the rents of the poorer classes to be kept within limits that they can afford to pay. This scheme is to operate during a 10-year period and after that time the Ministry may extend its operation for further terms of 5

years. Every 3 years the scale of rents to be paid by the tenants is to be revised by the Ministry.

4. Public funds are to be used up to an aggregate not exceeding 500,000 pesetas per year, nor exceeding 50% of the interest—the maximum rate of which is not to exceed 6%—of bonds and similar loans issued by builders, preference to be given to coöperative building societies.

5. Direct grants of funds by the government. These not to exceed 25% of the amount invested in buildings and land; the sum of 500,000 pesetas yearly is set aside as the maximum for this purpose.

All of the above exemptions, loans and grants are discretionary with the government and there is no appeal from their decision to any higher authority.

6. The central, provincial and local authorities are empowered to lease, rent or sell land for the building of houses under the Act. The local authorities may also build houses and raise loans for this purpose.

7. Local authorities in whose territory a housing shortage exists are required to submit within one year to the Government a scheme providing for the housing of the working classes in their district, a scheme which must be carried out within 20 years. In order to raise the necessary funds for the carrying out of these schemes, local authorities are authorized to borrow money and levy taxes upon developed land.

8. The local authorities, and in certain cases private building societies and individuals are given powers to condemn land and may thus acquire land for the building of workingmen's dwellings. For this purpose they can through a declaration of public utility and necessity acquire the land under greatly simplified legal proceedings. The compensation to be paid for such land is to be its value at the time of valuation upon the basis of rent charged during the 5 years previous, its rateable value for purposes of taxation and also the rent of similar land in the same locality.

9. The Housing Act is to be administered by the

Ministry of Labor through the *Instituto de Reformas Sociales*. Local Housing Boards to which the *Instituto* may delegate its functions may be established in each municipality with the mayor as President and composed of housing experts and representatives of builders, tenants and owners.

10. A unique scheme is provided against speculation and improper occupancy of the houses by a class for whom they were not intended through the provision that in the event of the tenant's death, the ownership can only revert to the widow or surviving heirs and cannot be willed to persons who would not under the terms of the law be deemed "workmen" and entitled to the benefits of these low-cost dwellings.

11. The Act also empowers local health authorities to issue orders to owners for the improvement of unsanitary premises, or even for their demolition where unfit for habitation; where the owners fail to comply with such orders, the local authorities are empowered to step in and make the improvements themselves and for this purpose may borrow funds.

12. The law specifically provides that in the building of the houses to be constructed under the Act, special preference shall be given to union labor.

The Act is careful to define what constitutes "cheap houses" and what constitutes a "workman" under this scheme.

## A BUILDING BOOM IN MOSCOW.

Recent dispatches from Russia indicate that the city of Moscow is enjoying an active building boom, more active than anything of the kind that this city has experienced in several generations.

One reason for this stir and activity is said to be the new economic policy of the Soviet Government which permits private enterprise to operate once more under a system of leasehold running for periods of 49 years. Real estate improvement had been virtually at a standstill since early in the World War. After the Revolution, which eventually brought the

seat of government back to the ancient capital, Moscow became one of the most crowded cities in the world.

Hundreds of business houses, as well as fine old homes, were so badly damaged during the revolution that it was necessary to rebuild them. Walls of scores of other buildings ruined by fire are still standing in various parts of the city, but provision has been made for remodeling most of these next spring. Store space is in great demand, due to the stimulus given by the resumption of free trade, and many one story affairs have been put up in the shopping districts. They resemble the stores erected in a boom town in the United States. Small wooden shacks for the retail selling of books, fruit, clothing and various necessities have been built temporarily here and there throughout the city, but these will be pushed aside with the resumption of trade through the ordinary channels. Entire blocks have been cleared for apartment houses with shop space on the ground floor and thousands of men and women—usually more women than men—have been employed in this work, carried on with great speed to get as much done as possible before the cold weather begins, when all outdoor tasks of this kind must cease until spring. There is hardly a block in Moscow these days upon which some repair work has not been done or a new building of some sort erected.

## HOUSING IN JAPAN.

Japan, in common with all of the rest of the world, has felt the consequences of the Great War and has suffered from a housing shortage due to high prices, as have all other countries throughout the civilized globe.

The Government, through its Home Department at Tokio, realizing the need of dwellings for both the middle class and lower class elements of the population, has notified Prefectural governments that the Government stood ready to loan money at low interest rates to public welfare agencies for the building of houses.

Another method employed to facilitate the building of houses has been the cutting down of state and imperial forests and shipping such lumber free of freight charges to local governments to use in their building enterprises.



Laws also have been passed granting to public welfare agencies the right to condemn land for these purposes and small houses built for the public good have been exempted from taxes for a period of years. In July, 1921, the Dwellings Association Act was enacted by Parliament.

The purpose of this Act is to provide people with proper dwellings. In order to avail one's self of it, a Dwellings' Association, consisting of not less than 7 members, must be formed and incorporated. Such an association is given the right to acquire land for building purposes and may lease, rent or transfer it to its members and is empowered to both build and buy houses.

Whenever such a local Dwellings' Association contemplates the building of houses, the government lends money to it at low interest rates, also giving it the right to contract for the use of state lands or public lands and exempts its buildings and land from local taxation. These Local Dwellings' Associations are supervised by the Home Minister, by Governors and Sub-Prefects and Mayors.

During the year 1921, the Home Department of the Central Government loaned to such organizations and other housing agencies the sum of 11,712,000 yen (\$5,856,000 par).

Japan has for several years past undertaken the building of workingmen's dwellings. In 1919, the city of Osaka built 387 houses at Chikko and Sakuranomiya costing 390,000 yen (\$195,000 par). These were for the benefit of salaried men and also for laborers below the middle class.

For several years the Government has loaned money to aid the building of houses in different parts of the country. Some of these were under the management of the city of Yokohama, the Association of Social Work of Tokio and the Legal Foundation of Housing Relief of Tokio. In 1920, according to government figures, there was a shortage of 122,821 houses throughout the country. To meet this deficiency but 15,500 houses have been built as a result of the aid extended by the Government which granted for this purpose in the form of government loans during the years 1919 and 1920, the sum of 23,000,000 yen (\$11,500,000 par).

## ANCIENT TOWN PLANNING.

Recent excavations at Tell-el-Amarna in Egypt have disclosed the ruins of a village which, according to C. L. Woolley, are probably the earliest efforts in Town Planning. One peculiar feature of this village was that the doors on the houses faced in the same direction, a blank wall in each street occupying the opposite side of the narrow thoroughfare. The houses were well preserved and give a vivid idea of the domestic life of the poorer classes of Egypt in the 14th Century, B. C.

## THE MADRAS AND BOMBAY TOWN PLANNING ACTS.

We regret that in our January, 1922, issue, through error, we attributed to Mr. W. R. Davidge, the English Town Planner, credit for the Madras Town Planning Act. Mr. Davidge had no relation to this. Those responsible were chiefly those Government officials having responsibility for Town Planning in that city. The Madras Act was based very largely on the Bombay Town Planning Act which became a law in 1915 and which is considered today by those qualified to judge, as one of the most important pieces of town planning legislation thus far enacted. The Bombay Act owes its existence largely to the initiative of A. E. Mirams, Consulting Surveyor to the Government of Bombay, who, for many years has preached the doctrine of town planning principles most effectively throughout India.

One of the interesting points of difference between the Bombay and Madras Town Planning Acts has to do with the apportionment of benefit arising from the execution of a town planning scheme.

In the Bombay Act provision is made for the authorities' combining, pooling and redistributing plots of private property in order to carry out the scheme. In the Madras Act any increase in values that results from the improvement is claimed by the Town Planning authorities *in toto* who take the entire increase in values for the city.

In the Bombay Act, on the contrary at least one-half of the increased values is left to the owners of the property affected,

the local authorities being limited to a maximum of 50% of the increased values and only this where the cost of the execution of the scheme cannot be met by a smaller levy.

As a result of this more generous treatment of the owners of private property, those in a position to observe the workings of the two plans at close range, report that the results have amply justified the experiment, as several Town Planning schemes have been taken up and carried out in most of the large towns in the Bombay Presidency, even for small areas measuring only a few acres as well as for areas containing over 2,000 acres, whereas while the Madras Act has now been in force for nearly two years not a single scheme has been carried out, in contrast to the large number of schemes in the Bombay Presidency.

## HOUSING CONDITIONS IN NEW ZEALAND.

In a recent study of infant mortality in New Zealand made by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor, some interesting information is given as to housing conditions in that country. It was because of the fact that the infant mortality rate in New Zealand is lower than that of any other country in the world and about one half that which prevails in the United States birth registration area that the study in question was made. After discussing density of population the report has this to say on the subject of housing conditions generally:

Of greater significance than density of population in its influence upon infant mortality, is the character of housing conditions and in particular the degree of housing congestion.

In general, housing conditions in New Zealand, so far as they relate to lot occupancy and style of house, are excellent. The prevailing type of house is the one-story cottage or bungalow, and even in the largest cities the house is generally surrounded by a small plat of land used as a flower garden or for vegetables. Nowhere is there any extensive overcrowding in tenement houses. The built-up areas devoted to business are relatively small, manufacturing establishments are few, and transportation

facilities permit those who prefer to live in the suburbs to travel back and forth to their work in the city center.

In 1916, 57.6% of all the inhabited private dwellings and tenements in the Dominion of New Zealand had an average of less than 1 person per room. Only 4% had an average of 2 or more persons per room. According to Chapin's standard, by which houses with over one and one-half persons per room are considered overcrowded, only 7.8% of the houses in New Zealand would have been classified as congested.

Room congestion was slightly greater in rural than in urban areas. In all New Zealand outside the four "metropolitan areas," which include the chief cities and their immediate suburbs, 12.8% of the inhabited private dwellings and tenements had an average of one and one-half or more persons per room, as compared with only 7.9% in the metropolitan areas. Among the four cities, Christchurch appeared to have had the least room congestion, and Wellington the most.

Comparative data in regard to housing congestion are not available for the United States. Data are also lacking for comparisons with previously existing conditions in New Zealand.

## TOWN PLANNING IN ONTARIO.

A year ago the *Ontario Town Planning and Housing Association* at its convention in Toronto adopted a resolution requesting the Provincial Government to appoint a Legislative Committee to consider the question of Town Planning legislation. This recommendation found favor with the Government and a committee of 11 members was appointed by the legislature to report to that body at its next session.

In order to aid this official body in its work the Ontario Town Planning and Housing Association of which Mr. J. P. Hynes, the Toronto architect, is President, and Mr. W. S. B. Armstrong of Toronto, Secretary, appointed local committees in a number of cities throughout the Province of Ontario to formulate outlines of the legislation required. The Toronto committee has for several months past been meeting at weekly



intervals and has evolved a draft Town Planning Act to be submitted to the Legislative Committee of Inquiry.

On October 17th and 18th, a conference was held at Toronto to consider these proposals. On this occasion in addition to consideration of the proposed Town Planning Act there were papers and discussions on such topics as "Why Town Planning? Must Ontario Have Slums? Women's Work in Relation to Housing and Town Planning, &c."

The following resolutions were adopted at this conference:

1. Resolved that a Provincial Bureau of Town Planning and Housing be established, the executive head of which shall have the status of a Deputy Minister.

2. Resolved that all town planning schemes shall be approved by the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board and may thereafter be varied only by consent of the board; that before town planning schemes be adopted local public hearings shall be held and that in all matters arising out of the carrying out of the proposed act Municipal Councils, planning commissions and the public shall have the right of appeal to the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board.

3. Resolved that the proposed act shall provide for two classes of Commissions: (a) Local Commissions to function only within their own municipalities and (b) metropolitan Commissions to function in metropolitan areas comprising more than one municipality.

4. Resolved that Town Planning Commissions as constituted under the proposed act shall have on their own initiative planning and advisory powers only, and in addition that they be empowered to carry on any work upon request of the municipality or municipalities for which they act.

5. Resolved that funds for carrying on the planning work of a local or metroplitan commission shall be provided by minimum levy of 1/10 of a mill upon the rateable assessment of the municipality or municipalities involved.

6. Resolved that every municipal council be a local Town Planning Commission under the proposed act until a separate local or metropolitan Commission has been appointed.

7. Resolved that housing is a municipal responsibility.

8. Resolved that the Legislature should enact a provincial housing code establishing minimum housing standards.

As pointed out by Mr. Armstrong in his call for the Conference, the Conference proves likely to be the most important town planning and housing meeting ever held in the Province of Ontario.

The Town Planning Act to be presented to the Legislative Commission of Inquiry is a well thought out scheme for the establishment of a Central Bureau of Town Planning for the Province with local Town Planning Commissions throughout the different municipalities of the Province. Such local Commissions are authorized to prepare a general plan of development of the whole or any part of the area included in the district which, at an appropriate time must be submitted to the Provincial Board or Bureau of Town Planning at Toronto.

All students of town planning legislation will be interested in studying the details of this well thought-out plan for administrative machinery to make town planning an accomplished fact in the Province of Ontario. Copies of the proposed bill and further information with reference to it can be obtained from Mr. W. S. B. Armstrong, Secretary of the Ontario Town Planning and Housing Association, 307 Lumsden Building, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

## TOWN PLANNING BILL FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA.

That constructive work in town planning has not been limited to the East is evidenced by the report of the recent action of the Town Planning Committee of the City Council of Vancouver. Here, in coöperation with the Municipality of Greater Vancouver, the Architects' Association, the Engineers' Association and the Real Estate Exchange and Trades and Labor Councils, a comprehensive town planning bill for the province of British Columbia has been prepared and will shortly be submitted to the British Columbia legislature.

## ZONING IN OTTAWA.

The City Council of Ottawa has recently granted an appropriation to the Town Planning Commission for the purpose of beginning work on the Zoning of that city, all Zoning officers to work under the direction of Mr. Noulan Cauchon, the Chairman and Technical Adviser to the Commission.

Mr. Cauchon is now at work working out a Zoning system for Ottawa and incidentally has recently urged the standardizing of zoning maps and symbols with relation to them, a sug-

gestion which has had consideration in recent years in the Town Planning Institute of America.

## HOUSING IN ONTARIO.

Interesting details with reference to the progress of Housing in the Province of Ontario will be found in the Annual Report of J. A. Ellis, Director of the Bureau of Municipal Affairs of the Province for the year 1921, recently published. In this report it is pointed out that there are now 99 municipalities which have passed by-laws under the provisions of the Ontario Housing Act of 1919, and have appointed Housing Commissions. Of these 19 are cities, 50 are towns, 17 are villages and 13 townships. Seventy-two municipalities have actually constructed houses. In addition 10 cities, 5 towns, 2 villages and 1 township have passed by-laws under the provisions of the Municipal Housing Act of 1920, and 11 of these municipalities have actually constructed houses.

The cost of construction it is stated decreased about 20% during the year 1921 and while there is still a considerable shortage of houses, the demand for new houses is nothing like so great as it was in the two years previous.

The Province secured in the form of loans from the Dominion Government for housing purposes the sum of \$8,750,000 which was loaned to it at the rate of 5%.

Under the three year operation of the Ontario Housing Act the Housing Commission loaned out to individual builders of homes the sum of \$7,768,018.40, and for land \$256,343.27. These loans were made to 17 cities, 34 towns, 13 villages and 8 townships. Up to the end of 1921, there had been repaid to the Provincial Treasurer on account of monthly repayments the sum of \$652,316.62 which with money paid on account for loans in excess of such repayments and for interest on money advanced on progress estimates made a total amount repaid to the treasury of \$1,017,302.90.

Out of 73 different municipalities only 4 at that time were in arrears in their payments, the total amount of arrears involved being only \$4,482.44. The Commission points out that the monthly repayments are as a rule remitted promptly on the first of each month.

A statement of the number and kinds of houses erected

under the various acts is not without interest. Altogether there were 2771 houses erected under the 3-year's operation of the two acts, and loans made for these buildings amounting to \$9,867,336.06.

The report points out that operations had almost ceased under the Housing Act of 1919, and that operations carried on under the Act of 1920, were becoming less and less and that it is anticipated that these will be discontinued entirely within a short time.

A statement of the method of operation that has been employed by which the building of houses has been aided through government loans will be found of interest. It may be summarized as follows:

Under the Housing Acts there were two methods of operation, namely:

First, where a person owned a lot, and conveyed it to the Housing Commission he could secure a loan for the erection of a house for the full cost thereof. The plans for the house required to be approved by the Housing Commission, and the Housing Department. The borrower could make his own contract for the erection of the house.

Second, a Housing Commission could purchase land, and erect houses thereon. The plans for such houses also had to be approved by the Housing Commission as well as the layout of the land.

Seventy per cent. of the houses erected under the Housing Acts have been erected under the first method, which has been pre-eminently successful. There has been no difficulty and no complaint whatever where houses have been erected under this plan. The monthly repayments have also been promptly met.

The second method has not been so successful. In some cases Housing Commissions have erected houses without having purchasers for them, with the result that in a small number of cases some houses are still undisposed of. In other cases Housing Commissions have allowed persons to take the houses without any cash payment, but with merely some security for the first three years' payments. In a number of these cases the Housing Commissions



have found it somewhat difficult to satisfy the persons who have taken the houses, and the Commissions have been put to some expense in altering houses.

While from a theoretical point of view the development plan is the ideal one in connection with Housing, from a practical point of view the other method has obtained much better results.

The cost to the Province of the administration of these Housing Acts in the two years, 1920 and 1921, totalled \$47,831.52.

## RANGES AND COOKING APPLIANCES.

One of the byproducts of the English Government's housing schemes has been the scientific research work that has been carried on by various Government Boards into different phases of cottage building.

One of the most interesting of these has been that which dealt with the efficiency of the old cottage range or cooking stove. An exhaustive study of this subject was carried on by the Fuel Research Board of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research under the direction of Mr. Arthur Barker as a result of suggestions made to that department by the Tudor Walters' Committee. One of the subjects in which it was indicated that research was desired with reference to the construction of working class houses, was an investigation into "cooking and heating grates with a view to determining the most suitable cottage types for standardization."

The results of these researches have recently been made public and published in a pamphlet of 55 pages with numerous tables, diagrams and charts. Copies of this important document can be obtained from His Majesty's Stationery Office, London, price 2s. 6d.

The report finds that the cottage range suffers in efficiency from having too many functions to perform and is remarkably inefficient in all of them, largely because it is required to do several things simultaneously.

As the reports point out, this style of cottage range is supposed to be merely a hot plate, but a hot plate that cannot be

heated without simultaneously heating the oven and the hot water supply.

The highest percentage in efficiency in cooking obtained with the common types of cooking stoves was about 11%, the average being about 7%, contrasted with an efficiency of 30% obtained by an apparatus especially designed for this purpose.

When it comes to serving as a source of hot water supply, it was found to have an average efficiency of only 11% or 12%, as compared with an efficiency of 45% in a range especially designed by the investigator for this purpose.

While the type of range used in England is very different from that used in the United States, still the studies thus made should prove of very great value in all countries. With the increased cost of building every item that enters into the workingman's dwelling is under challenge and no feature of that dwelling is too small to be relieved of scrutiny in the effort to build houses once more that are within the purchasing power of the average workman.

## THE TROUBLESOME OUT-BUILDING.

"The best laid schemes of housing men gang aft agley" on that difficult question of what to do when tenants find that they have not room in their houses for all of those accessories of living which play so important a part in the scheme of things; and what was laid out with an eye to beauty so that the backs of the buildings would be as attractive as the fronts gradually becomes an eyesore through the fact that the tenants have put up in one corner a little shed here, another there, a tool house in one part, a chicken-coop in another, a rabbit hutch further down the line. Some of the government housing schemes have been quite notable in this respect. We recall especially in this connection the Well Hall development at Woolwich.

Architects and students of improved housing will be interested therefore in learning of the determination of the Leatherhead District Council of England in instructing its architect to prepare sketches for sheds of uniform design in which the tenants can keep bicycles, "prams," wheelbarrows, tools, poul-

try, rabbits and the many things which tenants do desire to have near their houses.

By this means it is hoped that the usual odd and freak-like erections so often found spoiling the appearance of a well thought-out housing scheme may be avoided. All students of housing will watch with very keen interest the development of this plan.

## STONE TURF.

Word comes from German-Silesia of the use of a new building material known as "stone turf" which, from its description, sounds very much like the *pisé de terre* that has been so much talked about recently in England.

According to the dispatch "stone turf" is composed of strips of turf placed within heavy timber wall framing, alternating with layers of cement and chalk or hydraulic lime. Board forms are used as for concrete. The material is moistened and tamped as the layers are successively deposited. The material quickly hardens and tests have shown it to be equal in strength to walls laid up in brick.

It is said that the forms used are much less expensive than those required for concrete and the material is superior to concrete as a conductor of heat and dampness. Houses of this material are not damp and are warmer in winter and cooler in summer than houses with concrete walls of equal thickness. The cost is said to be about 40% less than for buildings of other materials because the materials are abundant and ordinary labor is used. For farm buildings and country houses it is quite popular. Stucco is used on the outside and plaster on the inside face of the walls.

## "FIVE HOUSES FOR FOUR."

"Five houses instead of four" sounds like "old lamps for new." With this striking headline the makers of a well-known American make of steam radiator advertise their product in the English trade journals, pointing out that by the use of this combined form of heat supply for cooking, heating and hot water it is possible in England to erect five houses of the usual type with the bricks that would be otherwise required for four.

By combining the three duties of heating, hot water supply and cooking from a single fire providing warmth for radiators in other rooms, the elimination of chimney flues, which are rarely if ever utilized, is made possible.

In England they point out it is customary to equip nearly every room, of even a small cottage, with a chimney flue, open fireplace, overmantel and hearth entailing the use of considerable more brick work than if the fireplace and chimney flue were omitted.

An architect's estimate shows that in a cottage of the ordinary type requiring about 20,000 bricks for its construction, 4,000 of these could be saved if the unnecessary chimney flues were omitted and the combined cooking and heating device installed.

In addition to this saving it is pointed out that a larger proportion of floor space in the rooms would be available as the hearth, curb, &c., occupy a very considerable amount of space in the regular type of house.

## THE USE OF COLOR.

Some years ago at the National Housing Conference held in Chicago a most interesting plea was made for the use of live glowing color in the homes of the poor by Mrs. Arthur T. Aldis of that city. Now it develops that in some of the new houses built by the local authorities in the city of Liverpool this idea has been availed of. Here, where the houses are being built with concrete blocks, it has been found possible to get variety in the scheme through the use of color. There are groups of 2, 4 and 8 houses in harmonious shades of silver gray, buttercup-yellow, white and red, &c., with string courses picked out in black and other colors according to the general scheme of decoration. A plinth course in black is said to be particularly effective and quoins of a different shade add a further touch of color in the external angles under bay windows and around entrance doors.

Those who have seen these houses report that the general result confirms the theory that brightness can be introduced into cottage building with considerable advantage, and that, properly handled, charming results can be obtained by the grouping of color blocks so that the old objections against the



use of concrete blocks on the score of monotony of appearance falls to the ground. It would seem as if there were great possibilities in this development—and also great danger.

## THE REDISCOVERY OF PLUMBING.

In any field of human endeavor it is worth while after the lapse of a period of years to compare present standards with those formerly in vogue, and if need be reformulate the old standards to more truly express the progress that has been made. The first tentative report of the Sub-Committee on Plumbing of the Department of Commerce's Building Code Committee, which was issued recently to those persons having a special interest in the subject, affords an excellent means of comparing the present with the past. For 40 years little has been done to restate, in a formal way, the basic principles of plumbing design. It was, of course, to be expected that a well chosen group of experts headed by Professor George C. Whipple of Harvard University would make a thorough investigation of the present status of house plumbing and express their findings in a definite manner.

More than 40 years ago, Colonel Waring and Mr. Meyer published in the "*Plumber and Sanitary Engineer*" (September 1, 1879) "Requirements for the Drainage of Every House". These requirements comprised 20 paragraphs dealing with the subject in a comprehensive manner, and prescribed a main trap, an air inlet, the extension of soil pipes through the roof trap ventilation for all traps, the indirect connection of fixture supplies, and the use of metal drain pipes within the house. The importance of these suggestions, considering the state of the art at that time, can hardly be realized in view of the advances that have since been made.

In the application of these principles from that time to the present, there have been two distinct groups who have given expression to their ideas in relation to plumbing design. On the one hand, there have been the craftsmen of the art who have in general held to the old time precedent of venting every fixture trap whether it be necessary or not, and almost invariably insisted on the use of 4-inch soil stacks which has so long been the customary size. On many occasions they have been frank to admit, that the purpose of complicated design

was to increase the work of the plumber, rather than to perfect the art of safe and economical plumbing. On the other hand, there has been constant criticism of modern plumbing by architects and engineers—some of whom had little knowledge of the subject—as involving needless complications and unnecessary expense.

Between these two extreme groups, there has been a third group of sanitary engineers who have approached the subject with open minds and who have realized that while some simplification was possible, a modification of the sizes of stacks and drains required careful study and extended experimentation. The necessity for the use of the main trap has been much discussed, and it is now generally admitted that a plumbing system is better without the trap than with it. The Report refers to an analysis of present code requirements in this regard. In 81 typical plumbing codes, 33 require running traps, 7 forbid their use, 12 make the use optional, and 29 include no regulation on the subject. The present report, which it must be understood is limited in its application to one and two family-dwellings, concludes that

The house or running trap with or without a fresh air inlet is under most circumstances not only unnecessary, but undesirable. There are some exceptions to this rule however.

Such an authoritative expression will doubtless have a marked effect in the future.

The use of 3-inch soil stacks, which has been common practice in Washington, D. C., since 1893, is upheld by the present Report, in the statement, "Soil stacks 3-inch in diameter can be made to give adequate service in ordinary two-story dwellings".

With respect to the omission of vent lines for each trap, the committee concludes,

Separate venting that is an individual vent for each trap—is not necessary. Group venting,—that is providing one vent for a group of fixtures—is safe under certain conditions designated in the Report. Adequate provision, however, must be made for air circulation.

To this conclusion, Mr. Spencer, the Journeymen representative on the committee, takes exception, claiming that, "his experience of 35 years has been such as to warrant an un-

shaken conviction in the popular practice of modern high grade plumbing for the employment of direct or separate vents as a preventive against syphonic action."

This is the only instance in which Mr. Spencer dissents from the conclusions reached by his colleagues.

The fourth chapter of the Report is devoted to a consideration of "Basic Plumbing Requirements" which afford interesting comparisons with those formulated 40 years ago. These are expressed in 18 paragraphs and each paragraph is accompanied by reasons for the recommendations stated. It is impossible to review these in detail, but the general character of the conclusions reached is a valuable feature of the Report. In the foot note to the paragraph which requires that each fixture or combination fixture should be provided with a reliable trap, attention is called to the fact

That no house trap or running trap is required. This trap and fresh air inlet are a needless expense. The trap tends to retard the free discharge of sewerage and air movements within the sewer system. The omission of the trap gives opportunity for inoffensively ventilating the street sewers through a multiplicity of outlets.

The portion of the Report which treats of the necessity of properly designed plumbing as a health measure is significant but is too long to permit of quotation. A single sentence may be quoted,

The new knowledge now in possession of sanitarians in regard to the lessened bacteriological dangers of sewer air leads logically to some simplification in plumbing design, but it should not lead to an abandonment of practices necessary to protect buildings against the air of drains which in addition to its possible danger is offensive to the smell.

The four pages devoted to the discussion of the application of police power are admirable and lay down the principle that,

Plumbing regulations cannot legally contain requirements which do not relate either directly or indirectly to matters of health, safety, morals, or the like. No requirements can legally be made which have to do merely with economies of construction, with benefits to the house owner or occupants, or with benefits to manufacturer, traders, or laborers, for the right and only legal use of the police power is to protect against injury. It is not to confer benefits, even though the benefits be for the public health.

Enough has been said respecting the scope and exhaustive treatment of the subject to suggest that it will have a far-reaching effect in modifying plumbing practice.

If space permitted, it would be profitable to give consideration to the chapters on "Standardization of Plumbing Materials" and "Experimental Investigations" which still engage the attention of the committee.

CHARLES B. BALL,

Chief Sanitary Inspector, Chicago Health Department.

## A GREAT INSURANCE COMPANY AND HOUSING.

Since the passage by the New York legislature of the amendment to the insurance law, permitting life insurance companies to invest 10% of their assets in the erection of apartment houses to rent for not exceeding an average of \$9 per room per month, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has completed plans and awarded contracts for its first investment under that law. Through its architects, Andrew J. Thomas and D. Everett Waid, plans and specifications have been prepared which will, in the judgment of those competent to decide, produce a plan superior to anything heretofore developed. From these, it is believed apartment houses can be erected at a price low enough to realize, at the prescribed rental, the operating expenses of the property, 6% on the Company's investment and a reasonable amount in excess of this, to amortize the cost of the buildings.

This new housing project of the Company will, it may be safely predicted, mark the beginning of a new era in the architecture of American housing. It creates an entirely new standard in multi-family housing. What this means to the dwellers of our crowded cities may be realized by comparing it with the standards which have been established in the housing of individual dwellings in small towns and suburbs.

The last 30 years have seen wonderful progress in small town housing until, today, the American who lives in the small house of the best type, of 5 or 6 rooms, situated on a little plot of land, enjoys, in comfort and convenience by far the highest standard of living in the world. But his city



brother has not been nearly so well off. Hasty speculative methods of building characterized by the unenlightened copying of out-of-date models, have blocked any real improvement up to a few years ago.

Since the war progress has been more rapid and now the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has taken advantage of recent improvements to bring out this new-model housing, which is far ahead of anything of the kind ever attempted before.

The Company's total investment will be about seven millions of dollars. There will be 54 houses containing 39 to 45 apartments each, making a total housing for 2150 families with about 9,000 rooms. The apartments will consist of suites of 4, 5 and 6 rooms with bath. The houses will be steam heated and have hot water supply. They will be wired for electricity and electric light fixtures will be installed. Every room will open either on the street, yard or the large interior gardens in the rear and at the sides of the buildings, so that there will be cross ventilation to every apartment and in many apartments 3 exposures. There will, therefore, be no dark room in any of the buildings.

The houses will be unusually safe in the matter of fire protection. All stairways are enclosed in brick walls and are entirely fireproof. There will be a separate stair-case for each 8 families. Fire escapes will, of course, be provided as required by law for every apartment, but none of these fire escapes will be on the front of the buildings. The fact that each house stands alone is a further element of safety from fire.

The yards in the rear of the houses will be landscaped and made into gardens so that there will be a pleasant outlook from the apartments that do not front on the street.

The location of the properties is the most convenient that exists, where land can be obtained at prices low enough to warrant the construction of such buildings. Grand Central Station of the Interborough Subway can be reached in about 7 minutes from the Long Island City and Woodside blocks and in less than 20 minutes from the Astoria block and when the Brooklyn Rapid Transit is in operation to Astoria and Corona. Times Square can be reached in the same short time. From

the Woodside blocks Pennsylvania Station can be reached by the Long Island Railroad in 8 minutes, Times Square and Grand Central Terminal in 10 to 15 minutes. Connection is also made with the Second Avenue Elevated line for one fare. The Long Island City blocks are within a few minutes' walk of the Bliss Street Station. The Astoria block is within a few minutes' walk of the Ditmars Avenue Station, the terminus of the Astoria Subway, the Woodside blocks about 5 minutes' walk from both Woodside station of the Long Island Railroad and Fish Avenue Station of the Corona Subway line.

It is interesting to know that the Company has already received applications for practically enough tenants to double the capacity of the buildings. It is not, however, the intention to offer any of them for rent until some of the buildings are completed and the tenants can inspect the apartments.

The Company also has under consideration the making of arrangements to sell these houses on the co-operative plan to persons of small means and the expectation is that they will be sold at as nearly actual cost as possible.

The Metropolitan Life hopes, through this enterprise, to produce results that will make it interesting to other builders and contractors to undertake the same kind of operation. Its desire is to produce houses at the lowest possible rental and selling price, in order that the part of our population, which has, up to this time, had no new buildings produced for their occupancy at rents that they could pay, will thereby have offered to them homes that have heretofore been considered impossible, at rentals that would even approximate those it is proposed to charge. The Metropolitan Life will need the co-operation of supply houses and mechanics in the building trades. It has been assured that it will receive the hearty co-operation of these interests and so far these expectations have been realized.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's interest in this matter is the same that it has in many others of its so-called welfare activities. The Company insures about 40% of the population of the cities—a very large majority being working people and persons of small incomes who have been especially hard-hit and inconvenienced by the high rents and improper housing that has existed during the past 5 or 6 years.

## MILLIONS LOANED FOR HOUSING.

It, therefore, felt about the beginning of 1920, because of the serious conditions that existed in all of the cities of the country, that it should devote as much as possible of its funds to assist in relieving this situation, and so made arrangements with properly qualified banking institutions, as lending agents in the different cities, to handle what are termed our housing loans, that is, loans on new small single family dwellings in amounts ranging from \$2000 to \$5000 and on new two-family dwellings and moderate priced apartment houses in whatever amounts would be warranted by the values. These loans are made and financed by the banks on commitments from this Company, that it will take them over by assignment when the houses are completed. They are made on a basis of 50% of the value of land and building; for 15 years, at interest rates current in the section, with a provision for payment of 3% semi-annual instalments of the principal on every interest date, and with a privilege to the borrower or owner of the house to pay the loan in full after 3 years on any interest date. The Company thereby provides a 15-year contract, so far as the borrower is concerned, and by the provision for instalment payments, forces the owners to save money in the best possible way, by gradually making their homes free and clear.

The object in this is twofold: To increase the security for the lenders and thereby provide for depreciation, but above everything else, to teach THRIFT. The long term loan gives the owner abundance of time to pay the mortgage, but provision is always made for the acceptance of larger instalments than called for in the mortgage, in order to encourage still further savings, if the owner desires. About 6 months ago, however, the Company enlarged its scope of operation and assistance, in that, it is now making loans on older properties as well as on new construction and also increased the maximum on single family dwellings to \$8,000. This plan, aside from stimulating new construction, also assists an individual in purchasing a home which might not be entirely new.

This plan has already been put into effect in about 275 cities, towns and suburbs throughout the United States, in all cases the business being handled by banks, trust companies and

mortgage guarantee companies. In New York and immediate vicinity, however, these loans are handled direct from the Home Office.

Since January 1, 1920, up to December 5, 1922, a period of a little less than 3 years, the following housing loans have been made and pledged:

About \$46,000,000 covering over 12,000 dwellings to accommodate in the neighborhood of 13,500 families.

Over \$63,000,000 on about 1,100 apartments to accommodate nearly 18,000 families.

As rapidly as time and safety will permit, the Company is continuing to extend its lending organization to other states and cities. At present it is operating in 31 states.

WALTER STABLER,  
Comptroller, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.

## PUTTING IT UP TO THE TENANT.

The New Jersey Board of Tenement House Supervision through its Secretary, Mr. C. Ray Swain, has recently in its educational work with both landlords and tenants addressed a statement to the tenants of New Jersey under the title "Are You Giving Your Landlord An Even Break?" They say:

### ARE YOU GIVING YOUR LANDLORD AN EVEN BREAK?

During the last few months articles have been circulated through the press of the State. The news items have been in the nature of warnings to owners of tenement houses urging them to maintain their buildings in strict compliance with the law. The Board of Tenement House Supervision does not wish to create the impression that the owners of tenement houses are the only violators of the law and takes this opportunity to address a few words of advice and caution to the tenants in tenement houses.

The tenement house act makes the owner of a tenement house primarily liable for violations of the law but very wisely makes the tenants, in certain cases, equally liable with the owner.



Paragraph 189 of the law provides that every person who shall violate or assist in the violation of the law shall be subject to a penalty of \$100.

I suppose that the vast majority of tenants will ask "How can I violate the law or assist in its violation?" It is not my house. I pay my rent promptly as agreed and the landlord should provide a well kept apartment for me to live in. We will agree that it is not your house, that you pay your rent and that your apartment should be maintained in a sanitary condition and in good repair. Thus far the tenants have the better of the argument. But, Mr. Tenant, what about your obligation to your landlord. He has heavy taxes to pay, insurance on his building, interest on his mortgage and must keep his building up to the standard required by law.

The majority of owners do their best to meet all of the obligations placed on them and yet, how many times are the best efforts of the owners frustrated by the wilful acts of the tenants. In the last report to the Governor the Board stated that it was necessary by special notice to secure the cleaning of 4,019 filthy halls and stairs and the removal of rubbish from 2,724 cellars. It is certain that a small amount of care on the part of tenants would have made it unnecessary to serve 6,743 notices on the owners of these buildings.

The relation between landlord and tenant is one of give and take and should be played on a fifty-fifty basis. Therefore, Mr. Tenant, play fair with your landlord. Help him keep within the law's requirements by doing your share. Remember! If you proceed to undo what the owner has done you are assisting in a violation of the law and are subject to a penalty of \$100. The Tenement House Act was enacted for your benefit and the Board of Tenement House Supervision has been working for you since 1904. Do you appreciate what has been done? If you do, show it by your acts. Start now and at least give your landlord an even break in the management of his house.

## IS HOUSING THE WORK OF A HEALTH DEPARTMENT?

There is a school of thought among public health men that housing plays no part in the work of a municipal health department. The members of that school, we are glad to say, are quite limited in number but the view is held quite strongly by a few.

It is interesting therefore to find in the recently published report of the Committee on Municipal Health Department Practice of the American Public Health Association that in their scheme for the Ideal Health Department for a City of 100,000 Population, housing is included as part of the work of its Bureau of Sanitation.

Incidentally, all students on Municipal Health Administration will do well to secure and study carefully this important document. That portion of it entitled "The Ideal Health Department for a City of 100,000 Population" can be obtained in the form of a pamphlet of 16 pages from the secretary of the American Public Health Association, at 370 Seventh Avenue, New York City.

## CALIFORNIA AND WOODEN SHINGLES.

A "burning issue" in the state of California recently has been the Wooden Shingle Housing Law which recently was voted on at a referendum election held in California in November when the proposed law was voted down by a majority of 5 to 1. The history of this legislation offers one of the most interesting chapters in the history of building legislation in the United States.

In the guise of an attempt to safeguard the lives of the people of the state it appears that manufacturers of patented roofing were successful in quietly putting a bill through the California legislature in the form of an Amendment to the State Housing Act which contained many provisions as to housing and incidentally a quiet little "joker," the effect of which would have been to have outlawed the use of wooden shingle roofs in California in future.

The lumber interests awoke to the situation too late to interfere with the passage of the law. They did, however, suc-

ceed in making use of a unique form of governmental procedure which is peculiar to the state of California, by which petitions were at once filed asking for a referendum on the bill that had just been passed. Under the provisions of the California constitution when petitions of this kind are filed in sufficient number the operation of the law in question is stayed until a referendum vote can be had by the people of the state.

The lumber interests apparently found no difficulty in securing an adequate number of signatures to a petition to accomplish this purpose and a strenuous campaign was waged throughout California during the past six months, culminating in the popular election held in November. It is reported that one county alone, namely, Los Angeles County, rolled up a majority of 200,000 votes against the so-called "Housing Act." Among those aligned against the Patent Shingle Law which would have prohibited the use of wooden shingles, were the State Commission of Immigration and Housing, the Fire Chief of San Francisco, 32 Chambers of Commerce throughout the State of California, the California State Federation of Labor and numerous other organizations. Edward Glass, Director of Housing of the State Commission of Immigration and Housing, was quoted in the campaign as opposed to the proposed law for the following reasons:

That the act does not lessen fire hazards but actually increases them.

That it lowers the sanitary standards set by the present housing laws.

That it puts the home builder at the mercy of the local building inspector who may, if he likes, "disapprove" not only of shingles but any nationally known and tested fire resistive roofing.

That it violates the fundamentals of building code provision, leaving the door open to building irregularities of all sorts.

That millions are being spent in other cities to correct just such abuses (rear lot tenements, etc.) as this act would inflict on the cities of California.

This California Shingle Law became so famous that it served

as the chief motive in a popular short story by one of the country's leading writers of fiction published in one of the country's leading magazines.

## BUILDING ORDINANCE FOR SMALL TOWNS.

The Portland Cement Association has recently issued a Suggested Building Ordinance for Cities and Towns Having Populations Up to 25,000. This ordinance comprises 14 type-written pages and includes 26 sections dealing with such subjects as: Fire Limits, Permit Required, Fireproof Construction, Incombustible Walls, Wooden Structures, Floor Loads, Working Stresses, Mortar, Masonry Walls, Bearing Power of Soils, Monolithic Concrete Walls, Clay Brick for Masonry Walls and Piers, &c.

## REDUCING COSTS.

If houses are to be built once more for the workingman of America it is apparent that some method must be found of materially reducing costs. Probably the most effective way would be through very considerable reduction in the costs of building materials and building labor, but there seems to be little likelihood of this much-desired result being accomplished in the near future.

Every means therefore by which costs can be reduced is worthy of the closest study and scrutiny. Recently a most illuminating article was published in the National Real Estate Journal written by Robert Taylor Jones of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau at Minneapolis.

In this article Mr. Jones points out in detail the specific savings that can be made in a typical small house of 5 or 6 rooms built of frame construction which, as he says, can be made to cost from \$1,000 to \$2,500 more than normal by insisting upon the best of everything throughout the house.

These suggestions are so valuable that we are publishing them in full. Mr. Jones says:

You must face the necessity of deciding just what equipment you can afford and to what limits your purse will permit you to go in buying extravagant materials and finishes.



## SOME THINGS YOU CAN OMIT.

We are listing here a representative group of items you must consider. There are many more of these things than we have space for. If your funds are limited you must reduce qualities in order to get the conveniences you must have. Some of the items we suggest will affect permanently the appearance and resale value of your house. Some of the items involve less expenditure at the first, but greater expense at the last. If you do not have the capital to invest as an initial home building expenditure you must be prepared to make sacrifices. We recommend that you make no sacrifices that will lessen the durability of your home.

Almost every clause of the specification has in it an element which charges your purse with expense. It is impossible in any article of this kind to go into these matters in detail. We recommend very strongly to you that you employ your local architect to assist you here. His wide experience and knowledge about things of this kind will be an asset to you on which you can profit. You will find his charge very reasonable. As a matter of fact, an architect's service may cost you nothing for he will enable you to avoid mistakes and he will assist you in making purchases to your advantage which will more than balance his fee.

The suggestions which follow are based on a home of from five to six rooms, outside dimensions approximately 25x30 feet. The values we list are approximate and will vary in different localities. They will also vary with the size of the house. To get the exact figure in each case you must obtain costs from your local market.

The items follow:

1. Omitting the basement partitions will save you from \$50 to \$150.
2. A fireplace with the mantel and all that it involves in labor and materials will cost from \$250 to \$400.
3. A brick base course will improve the appearance of your home. It will increase the resale value of the home.

It will cost from \$50 to \$100 more than a cement finish on the rough foundation wall.

4. Built-in fittings in the kitchen will cost you from \$100 to \$300, depending upon their design and extent. It might be less expensive for you to do without these, at least temporarily, substituting therefor one of the ready made devices of this kind. Unless the built-in fittings are extremely well designed, the ready made kitchen cabinets are preferable, and they may cost you less money.

5. A built-in refrigerator with waste and platform is more expensive than a separate refrigerator not so advantageously equipped. You may save from \$15 to \$25 on this item.

6. If you omit the porch you may save from \$300 to \$600.

7. If you do not glaze the porch you may save from \$100 to \$300. You can build the porch later on; you can do the glazing when your funds will permit you to do so.

### MANY MONEY SAVING WAYS.

8. Screening the porch is an extra expense. There are various kinds of wire cloth for screens. You must be prepared to select the kind which is within your means.

9. Our home plans call for 12-inch foundation walls to comply with the building codes of many cities. If you live where restrictions do not require this thickness you may reduce it, thus lessening the cost.

10. Perhaps you do not need to finish all the rooms just now. Omitting the plaster finish, flooring and wood trim in rooms to be finished later will save something. It would be cheaper in the long run to have all the work done at once, but your funds may not permit it.

11. We are especially interested in good construction and earnestly recommend that you insist upon it if you hope to make your dollars buy full value. We think that all exterior wooden walls should be insulated, for this serves equally well in hot and cold weather. You can hardly afford to omit this material, especially in regions

of severe winters. If you live in a region where the climate is not so rigorous you are justified in considering this item. An expense of \$75 to \$150 is involved.

12. Fire stopping as shown on our plans is recommended by the National Board of Fire Underwriters and deserves consideration for it has been designed to reduce losses by fire in frame buildings. Installation of this material involves an expense of from \$50 to \$150. Whether or not you omit it depends upon the location of your building with respect to the fire limits and the extent of your home building budget.

13. Stock moldings, fittings, doors and sash cost less than articles of this kind made to special order. Our drawings call for stock devices wherever possible. If your local dealers do not carry the exact profiles and sizes we have shown, permit them to substitute the nearest article they have. Special millwork will cost you a great deal more.

14. Consider the bathroom floor. Tile is desirable, but you must pay from \$30 to \$60 more than for a wood floor. An increased expense is involved if you have a tile cove.

15. The kitchen floor covered with battleship linoleum is becoming almost a universal type of finish. If you use it you must be prepared to pay from \$20 to \$30 more than for wood.

### A BETTER INSURANCE RISK.

16. If you stucco the exterior of your house be prepared to spend from \$150 to \$250 more than for wood finish. If you build it of brick the initial extra expense will be in the neighborhood of from \$400 to \$1,000 more than for the average wooden finished house and more if very expensive brick are used. Remember, however, that a home finished with exterior walls of masonry may give you a better fire insurance rate and it does mean a great saving in painting in the future and less depreciation. Even though the initial cost of permanent materials is more, the final cost is less, but you may not have the capital for a building of superior equipment.

17. Wooden shutters at your windows will cost from \$60 to \$80. Do not think of these as being merely ornamental. They have a real usefulness, especially in summer time. Of course you may install shutters later on when your finances are in order.

### HARDWOOD VERSUS SOFT WOOD.

18. Concrete or hollow tile block foundation walls or walls of brick may be less expensive in your locality than poured concrete walls. You must investigate this.

19. If the basement excavation is in clay perhaps you can use the excavation cut for one side of the concrete forms. There would be a saving in doing so. Some building codes, however, do not permit this. If the work is well done it is nevertheless quite satisfactory.

20. Hardwood floors cost more than soft wood. In every kind of wood there are various grades with varying degrees of expense. For example, as between the first and second grades of plain oak flooring, there may be a difference of \$50 in the cost of building your home. The medium grades are durable, and if the millwork is well done, and you have good workmanship with good painting, staining and filling, the appearance will be fine.

21. The cost of wood trim varies as the cost of flooring does. Soft wood is less expensive than hardwood for this purpose. Soft woods such as fir, pine, cypress, etc., can be used to advantage and at a saving, especially if they are to be painted. Some of the inexpensive woods stained or oiled are very beautiful.

22. When you have the woodwork finished, consider the relative expense of stain and varnish, painting, and enamel work. Stain and varnish will, as an average, cost from \$30 to \$40 less than paint. Three coats of paint can be had for \$30 to \$40 less than three coats of paint and two coats of enamel.

### ROOFING MATERIALS.

23. The initial cost of wood shingles is generally less than that of other materials for roofing although in some



cases they are less durable, and of course they are not fire resisting. If you have the wood shingles stained, be prepared to pay from \$20 to \$30 more. If the shingles are dipped, the expense will be increased.

24. Wide siding costs almost twice as much as narrow siding.

25. A clothes chute will cost you from \$15 to \$25.

There are many items about the plumbing which you should adjust to the limits of your building budget.

### CONSULT YOUR LOCAL ARCHITECT.

Your local architect will prove to be a source of intelligent direction in this regard. Consult him; trust him; he will save you money.

26. In selecting your bath tub, lavatory and kitchen sink you will find that you can have these made either of solid chinaware or iron coated with enamel. The chinaware is much more expensive than the enameled iron. It has certain advantages in the way of appearance and ease of keeping clean, but the enameled iron is durable and far less expensive.

27. A recess bath tub will cost from \$30 to \$40 more than a leg tub. Observe the different materials and designs in which these fixtures are offered. There is a wide range of expense.

28. Vitreous china lavatories, however desirable their qualities, cost more than the enameled iron ones. There is an item of approximately \$15 to \$30 here. The "pop-up" type of lavatory waste costs from \$4 to \$6 more than the chain and plug device. Consider whether or not you can afford a pedestal lavatory. The wall hung type will cost you less money.

29. All enamel iron plumbing ware is made in many designs, some of them with aprons or fronts and some of them with simple rims. The rimmed types cost much less than the others.

30. There are a great many types of water closets, tanks, and seats. The simple ones are satisfactory if well

made. You can save \$40 to \$50 by selecting a simple and economical fixture of this kind.

31. The kitchen sink is usually made of enameled iron. Sinks with aprons or with drain boards cast on are more expensive than those without either or both of these. A wooden drain board is less expensive than one of enamel iron. Combination hot and cold water faucets will cost from \$5 to \$6 more than separate faucets.

### WHERE TO SAVE IN HEATING.

There are items of expense about the heating plant which you must consider. Personal preferences are usually quite fixed in regard to the kind of heating system that must be used. You may not be able to buy the particular kind of heater you prefer. In order to have your house you must be prepared here, as elsewhere throughout the building, to take what you can afford to have. We urge you not to buy a cheap heating device of any kind, but if you are trying to reduce the heating expense to a minimum do not use expensive fittings and equipment. We urge you to consult your architect.

32. A heat regulator is a very desirable device. It will assist in decreasing your fuel cost. It may be outside of your initial expenditure. They cost from \$50 to \$100.

33. There are many forms of radiator valves—the leak proof type, indicator type, and others of a more simple kind. Compare costs.

34. The high type steam or hot water radiator costs less than the low type, but the former cannot go under windows. Consider this expense.

35. Automatic humidifying devices cost more than those you operate by hand.

36. The quality and degree of insulation you use on the heating pipes has a direct influence on the initial costs.

We have listed here some very practical ways to assist you in reducing the cost of your home. If you will go over each one of these items and see how, in your particular case, you can make it apply to your building, and, then if you will learn from your contractor the amount of

money saved by each one, you will be able to see just what the total sum saved amounts to. You can omit part or all of these items as you desire. Your saving will range between \$1,000 and \$2,500.

Let us stress once more the fact that a durable and commodious home may be erected for a reasonable sum if you will not ask for the more expensive fittings, materials and finishes.

## HOME OWNERSHIP.

The total number of homes in the United States, not including homes on farms, was 17,600,000 in the year 1920, according to figures recently issued by the Census Bureau at Washington. Of this number 7,195,000, or 40.9%, were owned by their occupants, and of these 2,855,000, or 39.7%, were mortgaged. The total amount of these mortgages is estimated by the bureau to be \$6,000,000.000, while the total value of the homes is placed at \$14,099,000.000. The ratio of the indebtedness to the value is 42.6%.

## A CLEVELAND SUBURB ADOPTS ZONING.

West Park, a suburb of Cleveland having a population of about 10,000 and an area of about 15 square miles, on December first adopted a Zoning Ordinance in the preparation of which Robert Whitten of Cleveland was Consultant. This action was preparatory to the expected annexation of West Park by the City of Cleveland.

## REALTORS AND ZONING.

Without question the most important factor in the rapid and widespread development of the Zoning movement in the United States is the splendid support given to Zoning by the realtors of the country led by the National Association of Real Estate Boards of which Herb Nelson is Executive Secretary.

In a recent editorial in their organ, the National Real Estate Journal, they say:

The demand for Zoning is sweeping this country with

an unprecedented rapidity in the history of American municipal government. One hundred and forty-one municipalities have already adopted or are now preparing Zoning ordinances. The profound influence of Zoning upon real estate values has made this movement of especial interest to realtors. Real estate boards everywhere are constantly taking a very active part in the promotion and development of proper Zoning ordinances. A collection of ordinances, together with literature on the subject, is being made at national headquarters which may be of some service to real estate boards interested in this subject.

### ZONING IN IOWA.

At the recent convention of the realtors of Iowa, A. G. Bauder, realtor of Cedar Rapids, pointed out the inadequacy of the existing Iowa Enabling Act passed in 1917 and recommended its repeal and the enactment of a new law based upon the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce. Following these suggestions the Iowa Realtors' Association adopted a resolution along these lines.

### A GAS ATTACK ON ZONING.

An interesting but unsuccessful effort to create public sentiment prejudicial to Zoning was recently attempted in the city of Detroit where an effort was made to create an unfavorable prejudice toward Zoning by stating that its origin and development was to be found in Germany, the suggestion being made therefore that Zoning was un-American, bureaucratic and socialistic.

As was pointed out by the proponents of Zoning, Zoning is one of the most democratic schemes that have been devised. Each owner of land within a given district has exactly the same privilege of development as every other owner in the district. No changes either in the boundaries or in the regulations of the district can be made by the common council until due notice has been given and a public hearing held upon such changes, which gives the people every opportunity to express their views with regard to the character of their surroundings.

It is quite useless to attempt to stem the tide of Zoning progress.



## FOR SALE

By EUGENE BROWN,

PEORIA REALTY BOARD

Six room house, suburban, down town,  
Three rooms up and three rooms down,  
Hardwood floors, made of old soft pine,  
Big spare room measures 4 by 9;  
First class space for bath and bowl,  
Piped for furnace, a hole for coal;  
Roof leaks some, only when it rains,  
Walls all frescoed with daubs and stains;  
Glass in the windows was cleaned last year;  
Basement, plenty of room for beer;  
Good leather hinges on every door,  
Get your locks at any hardware store;  
Sink in the kitchen is filled with grease,  
Shades cost almost 10 cents apiece.  
Ten bucks down, anything that's fair,  
Balance on tick as you get it to spare.  
Lawn grass died seven years ago;  
You won't have any grass to mow.  
See this house any time you wish;  
Deal with owner and save the commish!

## IN THE SOUTH.

The Tennessee Realtors' Association at its Annual Convention in Memphis held a few weeks ago took similar action and adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, further, that we recommend to the member boards of the various cities the importance to the cities of a definite Zoning and city planning scheme. As our cities grow this need will be more acutely felt and unless steps are taken at once to remedy a situation which is inevitable with a growing community, it will be too late to adopt the definite workable system of this kind without entailing enormous additional cost and trouble to the respective communities.

## IN NEW YORK STATE.

Probably the most interesting illustration of the support given by realtors to the cause of Zoning is found in the recent action of the New York State Real Estate Association at its convention held in Albany a few weeks ago at which resolutions were adopted calling for the legislature to enact laws making Zoning of the cities of New York State compulsory.

When it is remembered that New York State was one of the first states to enact permissive Zoning laws and that today under the existing law every incorporated city, town or village in the state is empowered to adopt Zoning plans, this action of the realtors of New York in recommending *compulsory* Zoning is most significant.

## ZONING PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES.

How great that progress is is evident from an interesting presentation made recently by Miss Mary T. Voorhees of the Division of Building and Housing of the Department of Commerce at Washington in an article published in the Engineering News Record.

In that article Miss Voorhees points out that at that time Zoning regulations had been adopted in 78 cities; that 25 states and the District of Columbia had passed enabling acts giving cities the right to zone; that at the present time 75%

of the cities in the United States having a population of over 100,000 either are Zoned or are in process of Zoning.

Accompanying Miss Voorhees' article is a list of states and cities with Zoning laws and ordinances as of September 1922, grouped by states. Under each state is given the name of the city, the character of the ordinance, whether comprehensive or limited to Use or Height only and the year in which the Zoning ordinance was adopted.

## CHICAGO'S ORDINANCE.

The Chicago Tentative Zoning Ordinance which has been in course of preparation for the past year by the Zoning Commission of Chicago with Edward H. Bennett and William E. Parsons, as Consultants, has recently been adopted by the Zoning Commission and several thousand copies of the ordinances and maps have been printed in anticipation of the public hearings with reference to the ordinance which were scheduled to be held the latter part of this month.

So far as can be judged it does not appear at present writing that any organized opposition will be expressed to any part of the ordinance excepting possibly the Height provisions in the "Loop" district.

In this connection the recent action of the local authorities in Chicago in letting down the bars so as to permit tall buildings to be built to a very great height, thus radically changing the plans of the new Chicago Tribune building, is significant.

In our last issue we discussed the decision of the Illinois Supreme Court in the Forest Park case, a decision which some people in Chicago believe might leave the city of Chicago without legal power to enact a Zoning ordinance.

Fearing this some of the people interested in Zoning in Chicago had inserted in the proposed Revised Constitution for the state of Illinois a section specifically giving the cities of the state the right to adopt Zoning regulations.

At the special election that was held to consider this constitution in December, the constitution, we are informed, was overwhelmingly voted down.

So far as the cause of Zoning is concerned, this was not a calamity but something that can be regarded with equanimity ;

for, the proposed section of the constitution which had been prepared to give Zoning powers to the cities of the state was of very doubtful wisdom.

## INDIANAPOLIS ADOPTS ZONING.

Indianapolis, following the example of other leading cities of the country, recently by vote of its Council unanimously adopted a Zoning Ordinance on which the City Plan Commission had been working since January last, with Robert Whitten as Consultant and Lawrence V. Sheridan as Secretary and Engineer of the City Plan Commission.

Five Use Districts are established: (1) dwelling house; (2) apartment house; (3) business; (4) first industrial and (5) second industrial. Following the practice in those cities where Mr. Whitten has recently served as Consultant, efforts are made in the new Indianapolis ordinance to limit density of population by regulating the number of families that are permitted to be housed on a given number of square feet of lot area. These area requirements are designed to spread out the population, prevent congestion and promote detached house development.

In one limited section 7500 square feet of lot area per family is required; in the less developed areas around the borders of the city 4800 square feet per family is required; and throughout the rest of the dwelling house districts 2400 square feet per family is deemed necessary, which would give an arrangement of 2 families on the ordinary 40 by 120 foot lot, the size which prevails in those portions of the city.

In those districts in which apartment houses are permitted 1200 square feet of area per family is required and in limited portions of the apartment house districts as little as 600 square feet per family is permitted. In a small portion of the city in districts especially suitable for hotels and elevator apartment houses, no attempt has been made to limit the number of families or people that may be housed on a given area.

When it comes to height restriction, the ordinance sets its maximum limitation at 200 feet. This, however, is only permitted on a street 100 feet or more in width. Throughout most of the district in which the maximum height limit is



allowed, the real maximum is 180 feet or twice the width of the street. There is practically only one street in Indianapolis, Washington Street, with a width of 120 feet, on which the 200-foot height limit will be permitted.

Following the practice in other cities, a system of set-backs is provided for by which as buildings exceed the maximum height they are required to set back in a given ratio. In Indianapolis the ratio is 1 to 3, but different from New York and some of the other cities whose zoning ordinances have been adopted, this set-back must be from *all* lot lines, rear lines and side lines as well as from street lines.

Copies of the new ordinance are now available in printed form with accompanying maps and can be obtained by addressing Lawrence V. Sheridan, Secretary, City Plan Commission, City Hall, Indianapolis.

## ZONING IN BUFFALO.

The Buffalo City Planning Association has recently begun the issuance of a monthly bulletin under the title of "City-Facts". The first issue began with October and contains on its title page a Future Programme in 10 divisions for the future development of that city, one of which is Zoning for the Protection of Homes and Rational Industrial and Business Development.

Last May a temporary Zoning ordinance was passed by the Buffalo Council pending the development of a comprehensive Zoning ordinance which is now being prepared. All students of City Planning will be interested in seeing this effective little bulletin.

## CALIFORNIA'S REGIONAL CONFERENCE.

Following up its successful regional conference held in Los Angeles County last September, California held its Fifth Regional Planning Conference at Los Angeles on November 25th. All students interested in regional planning should obtain a copy of the Interlocking Specification for the Regional Plan of Los Angeles County which was presented at the September Conference. Copies can be obtained by addressing G. Gordon Whitnall, City Hall, Los Angeles, California.

## REVISED EDITION OF THE STANDARD ZONING ACT.

The Department of Commerce has recently issued a Revised Edition of the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act. This Revised Edition contains a number of textual changes and in addition important substantive changes with reference to the Board of Adjustment. All persons who are contemplating the introduction in the coming legislative sessions of their states of a Zoning Enabling Act should immediately obtain from the Division of Building and Housing of the Department of Commerce at Washington a copy of this Revised Enabling Act and should substitute this for the earlier edition issued last May.

### ZONING IN BOSTON.

The eighth Annual Report of the City Planning Board of Boston is a document of much interest. The report covers 44 pages and includes a résumé of the cost of construction of new streets, parkways, and other municipal improvements in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and 20 or more other cities of the country. Tables are also given for these cities giving population, area, valuation, tax rate, and the cost of individual projects. In Boston the billboard situation is still up for discussion and a Zoning plan is being prepared. The Board states

That definite steps should be taken toward the preparation of a comprehensive plan for the City of Boston, to include a major street plan, taking into account the necessity for reasonable parking privileges in the downtown district; a Zoning plan establishing residential, commercial and industrial districts and providing for the restriction of public garages and the regulation of billboards; the development of harbor, port and railroad facilities; the location of municipally owned buildings; recreational facilities; a regional plan; and a topographic survey.

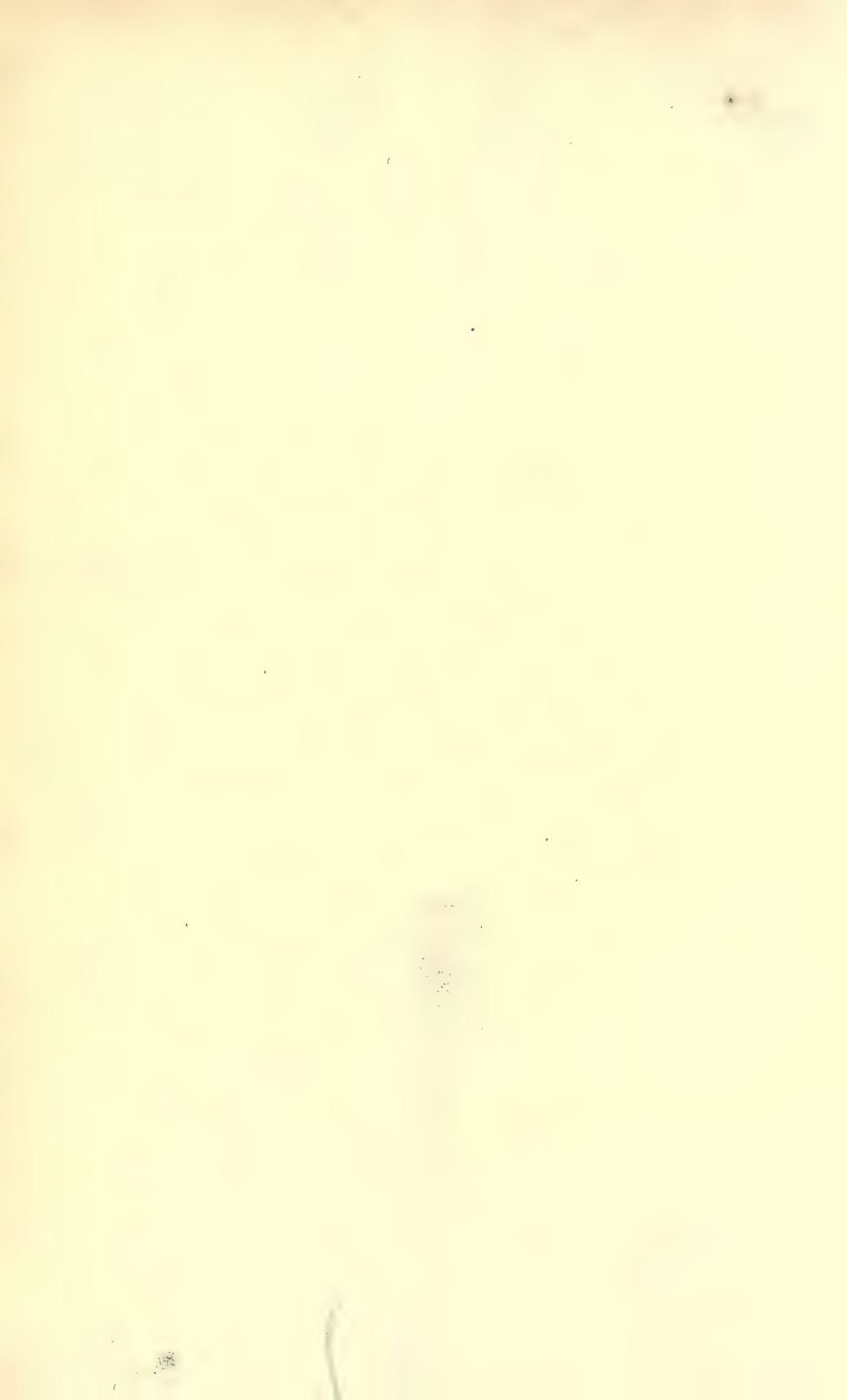
The Report also discusses the location of public buildings and a map is included showing the location of all municipal buildings in the city. Certain special playgrounds and open spaces are also discussed. The widening of Washington Street, Morton Street, the East Boston traffic tunnel, housing,

a wholesale terminal market, a memorial boulevard, utilization of old ferry boats, and many other matters are also considered. The members of the Board are Frederic H. Fay, Acting Chairman, Henry Abrahams, Mary A. Barr, John J. Walsh, and Elisabeth M. Herlihy, Secretary.

Mayor Curley is greatly interested in City Planning and has devoted much time to projects for the improvement of the city. He has called attention to the vast number of Reports which have been prepared during the last few decades for the improvement of the city, and the comparatively small number of improvements which have been carried out. He believes the time has come for executing improvements whose importance is well established, and he has submitted bills to the legislature to secure money for carrying out work of this kind. There is reason to believe that during the present administration Boston will make a substantial advance in replanning.

Those who are interested in the Report may be able to secure copies, if the edition is not exhausted, by addressing the Secretary of the Planning Board at the Boston City Hall.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF,  
Landscape Architect, Boston.





# Housing Betterment

MAY, 1923

A Journal of Housing Advance

Issued Quarterly by  
The National Housing Association



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# Housing Betterment

105 EAST 22nd STREET, NEW YORK CITY

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## THE SITUATION IN ENGLAND

THERE have been kaleidoscopic changes in the Government Housing situation in England since it was last discussed in this journal\*. We reported then the fall of the Government and the appointment of Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen as Minister of Health in place of Sir Alfred Mond. His tenure of office was short-lived. Submitting himself to the electorate a few weeks ago he was overwhelmingly defeated at the polls—a defeat which was construed by the Government, and rightly so construed, as a repudiation of the Government's Housing Policy—more especially with reference to de-control of rents.

In his place the Government has appointed Neville Chamberlain of Birmingham. No better appointment probably could have been made in all England. Mr. Chamberlain has been a student of the housing question for many years. He has been actively associated with local Housing Committees in his own city of Birmingham; a short time ago he headed a Governmental Committee on the question of Slum Clearance and he has for years been recognized as expert to an unusual degree in problems of municipal administration. He has been a member of Parliament for many years and is skilled in knowledge of Parliamentary practice—in a word, he is a very fitting descendant of his distinguished ancestor, Joseph Chamberlain.

Since taking office Mr. Chamberlain has devoted much of his time and attention—in fact a large part of it—to a consideration of the housing question. Numerous conferences have been held with various groups with the idea of formulating a housing policy, which would conform to the principles of the present Conservative government and its declared policy of getting back to private initiative at as early a date as prac-

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\* "Housing Betterment", January, 1923.

ticable, and which would steer clear of the rocks of socialism and would be in harmony with the clearly declared voice of the people at the recent election.

### THE NEW HOUSING BILL

As was to be expected, the British Government has now been forced to take a further step in connection with its policy of government housing. Accordingly, on April 11th the Government introduced into the House of Commons its Housing Bill—known as “Housing &c., (No. 2.) Bill”.

Notwithstanding the general recognition of the genuine desire of the Government to produce a measure that will bring relief in a most distressing situation, the measure has met from every quarter with a storm of opposition. So far as one can judge no party or group of interests seems to be satisfied. The representatives of the local authorities on the one hand object to it on the ground that it places an undue financial burden on them and say that the Federal Government has not been generous enough in its terms.

Scotland strenuously objects to being coupled up with England in its housing legislation; heretofore it has been under a separate law. Its representatives in Parliament vociferously claim that the type of house built in Scotland is radically different from that which is accepted in England and that Scotsmen will have nothing to do with “debased English standards”. The opposition, viz., the Labor Party, on general principles, object to the entire measure; partly, we imagine as a political gesture, but largely because the bill is not socialistic enough and does not give to the workingmen of the country greater and greater benefits and subsidies at the expense of the taxpayer.

Practically every interest objects to one feature of the bill which seems to have proved the storm center of discussion, viz., the proposed limitation on the size of the house to receive the subsidy, the conditions prescribed being such as in the popular understanding would preclude the building of the so-called “parlor house”.

### WHAT THE BILL DOES

The measure is a comprehensive one of 21 printed pages and contains 20 Clauses. Those who advocate Government

Housing in the United States and those who are opposed to such an invasion of the field of private business and the extension of governmental activities, will be interested in a statement of the main provisions of this important measure, which may be summarized as follows:

### MAIN PURPOSE.

#### To Stimulate Private Enterprise and Encourage Home Ownership

1. It provides a Subsidy, to be Paid Only to Local Authorities.
  1. For assistance to private enterprise.
  2. For houses built by the local authority.  
(Local Authorities will have to satisfy the Ministry that this is necessary.)
2. Limitation of Size of Houses to Receive the Subsidy.
  1. "Parlor" and "Non-Parlor" Types.
  2. The Type—  
2 story—with minimum of 620 superficial feet and maximum of 850 feet.  
1 story and flats—with a minimum of 550 superficial feet and maximum of 780 feet.  
Permits Scullery, Living Room, Parlor, 3 Bedrooms, Bath.
  3. Purpose—  
To build for the working class and let private enterprise, without subsidy, take care of the others.
3. Slum Clearance.  
State to pay one-half Estimated Annual Loss for re-housing.
4. The Subsidy.
  1. State to give £6 per house per year for 20 years for new houses built.
  2. This is estimated to be one-half the loss—Local Authorities to pay the other half.
  3. Note: the loss, however, runs for 60 years; the subsidy only for 20 years.
  4. This reverses the Addison Policy.
5. Assistance to Private Enterprise by Local Authorities.

1. Lump Sum Subsidy to Builders on Completion of New Buildings.
2. Annual Contribution to the House Owner or Occupier by remission of a part of the local taxes, for a period of years—Not U. S. Tax Exemption Scheme.  
(It goes to the house, not to the builders.)
3. Advances by Local Authorities to individuals purchasing houses through Building Societies.
6. Subsidy Direct to Employers' Housing Associations.  
On same basis as if a Local Authority.
7. Building Trusts and Combines to be Controlled.  
Prices to be Regulated If Necessary.
8. Without State Aid—Local Authorities Empowered to Advance Funds to Individuals to Build and Purchase Homes of Middle Class and Skilled Artisan Types.
9. Without State Aid—Local Authorities Empowered to Make Similar Advances to Public Utility Societies.
10. Encourages Conversion of Dwellings to Flats—by Letting Local Authorities Tax on Basis as if Private Dwellings.
11. Provides for Further Assistance to Public Utility Societies by the State.
12. Permits Local Authorities to Borrow to Secure a Fund to Pay for Compulsory Repairs.
13. Provides for Model By-Laws.  
Streets particularly.
14. Town Planning Schemes Postponed Three Years to Encourage Regional Planning.

This measure is so important a step in the development of Government Housing policies and affords so practical an object lesson to the student of this subject that we are printing in full the speech of Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Minister of Health.

We wish that it might be possible to print also material parts of the Parliamentary Debates that followed. The Debate on the Bill lasted through two entire days—April 24th



and 25th; and the fires not having died down, were resumed again through the better part of two more Parliamentary days—on May 2nd and May 3rd.

These Debates contain so much valuable information, not merely on the housing question in England, but on the whole housing question, and are so significant and such a mine of information, that we strongly advise our readers to obtain copies of the official record (*Parliamentary Debates Nos. 44, 45, 48, 50 & 51, April 24th, 25th, 30th, May 2nd and May 3rd. H. M. Stationery Office, London, price 6d. each*). At the conclusion of the debate the bill was ordered to a second reading, the Government on a division being sustained by a vote of 340 to 140.

## THE MINISTER OF HEALTH'S STATEMENT

In opening the debate on the measure Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the Minister of Health, said:

Of all the problems which the War has left behind it, there is none that is more obstinate or more persistent than that which concerns the housing of the people. As we look around us we see progress going on in many directions, and, although we may still be far from our goal, which is a return to normal conditions, yet at any rate it is perceptible that we are moving. But in housing, after four years, and in spite of a prodigious effort, the results of which were altogether disproportionate to the cost, we hardly seem to be any better off than we were.

The census of 1921 show that in the last 10 years the average increase in the population of the country was a little over 181,000, and if you take the average family in the country as consisting of four and a half persons, which is rather more than the actual figure, it will be seen that of the 215,000 houses, which have been provided with State assistance, no fewer than 161,000 were required to meet the normal and ordinary increase in the population, leaving, therefore, only 54,000 as a contribution towards the reduction of the shortage. So we find ourselves to-day faced with the condition that great masses of our people are unable to find separate dwellings for themselves, and they have to be herded together without privacy, without comfort, without almost the ordinary decencies of life.

## THE DANGERS OF OVERCROWDING

The effects of this over-crowding are far-reaching. It constitutes a perpetual danger to the physical and moral health of the community. It is, I am sure, responsible for much unrest and social discontent, although I am bound to say that anyone who is familiar with the conditions in the poorer parts of our great cities must, after all, be dominated by a feeling of admiration for the patience and the good humor with which for the most part these evils are borne.

But that is only a further claim upon our consideration, and indeed every consideration of humanity, of patriotism and even of prudent care for the future, must impel us to the conclusion that there is no question more urgent, and none that cries more loudly for immediate attention than this question of housing, which, so long as it continues, must remain, of course, a great anxiety to those who are responsible for the Government of the country, to whatever party they belong. It would be easy to give the House poignant illustrations from my own experience of the tragedies to which this state of things has led, and, if I refrain from doing so, it is because I feel sure that the House is convinced already, that it does not require further evidence, and that it would wish me to address myself to the much harder task of trying to find some remedy.

After all, eloquent expressions of sympathy, of pity and even of indignation will not provide houses. It is not enough to pour out the most lavish expenditure of the nation's money, as we have already learned to our cost. We have got to treat our problem with sense as well as with sensibility. We have got to realize that our resources, great as they are, cannot be mobilized in the twinkling of an eye, and that the only result of calling for a higher rate of speed in building than that which the trade is able to undertake would be to cause a rise of prices which would be disastrous to the whole scheme, and which would speedily bring it to a standstill.

## THE BILL NOT A SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM— ONLY A BEGINNING

To my mind, the important thing is that we should begin our work upon lines which are capable of growth and develop-

ment, and that as far as possible we should try to avoid artificial devices which cannot go on indefinitely and which, when sooner or later they come to an end, will leave nothing behind them. Therefore, I am going to ask the House to regard this Housing Bill from that point of view, NOT AS A SOLUTION OF THE HOUSING PROBLEM, BUT AS THE BEGINNING OF A SOLUTION; NOT AS THE ENGINE ITSELF, BUT AS THE STARTING APPARATUS WHICH WILL PUT THE ENGINE IN MOTION.

This is not entirely a war problem. To find the origin of the shortage, we have to go back further than 1914. We must go back to an historic year, the year 1909. If you take the houses under the annual value\* of £20, you will find that the net annual increase in the five years previous to 1909 was 80,000. In the five years after 1909, it fell to 46,000. \*\*\*\*\* Therefore, what we have got to do today, if we are to get back to similiar conditions, is not merely to reinstate the small builder who did most of the work, but also to restore, or, if we cannot restore, to replace, the financial machinery by which alone he is able to carry out his operations.

What is the situation to-day? Private enterprise is beginning to function once more. \*\*\*\*\* During the last six months upwards of 12,000 of such houses have been completed and a further 16,000 are in course of erection. \*\*\*\*\*

## TO STIMULATE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND HOME-OWNERSHIP

If I may sum up this preliminary statement, which was really necessary in order that I might indicate to the House what were the ideas underlying this Bill, I would repeat that it is not to be regarded as an instrument for making up all the arrears of housing in a period of little more than two years. What I hope it may do is to lay the foundations; and those foundations are the two lines of policy which I have indicated, namely, the encouragement of private enterprise, and the stimulation of the desire which I believe exists among large sections of the population, to be able to own their own houses, by giving them facilities for obtaining capital; and with that policy is coupled a temporary provision, lasting only for a short time, in order that we may tide over an interval during which certain particular classes of houses could not

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\* Rental value—Editor.

be provided by private enterprise alone, and that object we hope to achieve by means of the subsidy.

### THE BILL EXPLAINED IN DETAIL

Now I come to the detailed examination of the Bill, and I propose this afternoon to confine myself, for the most part, to those Clauses which are concerned with the main lines of policy and with the special temporary provision about which I have been speaking.

Clause 1 deals with THE PURPOSE OF THE SUBSIDY. It will be observed that it is to be paid only to local authorities, and not to individuals, but that it may be used for two purposes: (1) for giving assistance to private enterprise, and (2) for providing houses by the authority itself. It is provided that before the second is adopted, the authority will have to satisfy the Minister that the needs of a particular area can best be met in that way. \*\*\*\*\*

### PARLOR HOUSES AND NON-PARLOR HOUSES

I come next to Sub-section (2) which deals with the LIMITATION OF SIZE, and if I am to judge from my correspondence and from what I see in the press, and from the manifestos which have darkened the air for the last two or three days, this is a provision which excites the greatest interest and the most criticism of any in the Bill. I have to admit that I, myself, am partly responsible for some of the misunderstanding which has undoubtedly arisen as to the purpose and intention of this Sub-section. In answering questions I have, myself, used the terms "parlor house" and "non-parlor house" as compendious terms, which expressed as I thought, fairly well, the class of house I had in my mind, but because I have spoken of subsidized houses as "non-parlor houses" it appears to have been thought that I had some prejudice against a parlor as such, that I desired to give the children no room for study, and sweethearts no room for courting, and generally to lower the standard of the working-class population. I very much doubt whether the activities of the sweethearts would be hindered in any way even if no parlor were provided. \*\*\*\*\*



## THE SIZE OF THE HOUSE

I gather from the interruptions just now, that hon. Members consider that the space allowed is insufficient to permit of the inclusion of a parlor in the house which is contemplated. That is not so, because houses are being built today which come within these limits, and which do provide parlors, and I would like to give the House the dimensions of the rooms in such a house, because I think if hon. Members will take note of them, and measure them by some of the rooms in which people are now living, they will see that they do not compare unfavorably with the standards which obtain to-day, but, on the contrary, are something very much better. That is what can be put into the house. On the ground floor a scullery, 7 feet 6 inches by 5 feet 10 inches; living room, 12 feet by 13 feet 4½ inches; parlor, 10 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 3 inches—big enough to court in. \*\*\*\*\*

## SIZE LIMITED TO ENSURE WORKING CLASS HOUSES

I ask the House to consider this, and not to be led away by purely sentimental considerations, because these unfortunate people are depending very much for their housing accommodation upon the final decision taken in this matter, and I would warn hon. Members that if, as a result of increasing the space permitted, the class of houses to be built should be all of the higher type, instead of the type that I have thought of in drafting this part of the Bill, one of two things must happen. Either those houses will be inhabited by persons in a better condition to afford the rents, earning higher wages, who want houses, no doubt, but who are not living under such bad conditions as those of whom I have spoken, or else, if these people are put in, they will be forced to take in lodgers, and to those lodgers they would let the bedroom or parlor. They would have less accommodation than we have desired to give them, they would have lost their privacy, and they would be on the road to create again the very conditions that we want to overcome.

## SLUM CLEARANCE

I come now to Sub-section (3), which is the only provision in this bill which deals with the question of SLUM AREAS. I

do not want the House to think that this is the last word of the Government upon this subject. I do not think anyone in this House can have given more attention than I have to the difficulties in connection with slum areas, and I hope at some future date, when I have had more time to work out my ideas, I may be able to bring in some further legislation. In the meantime we have a Clause here which will, I think, enable us to get some considerable amount of work done during the next few years, and it may be remembered in that connection that there is a very close tie between the amount of work we can do in slum clearance and the available provision of new houses. You cannot turn people out into the street to pull down the old houses. You must see that there is somewhere to receive them before you can really undertake any great or drastic scheme of slum clearance. But we substitute here, in this Clause, for the old provision whereby the liability of the local authority was limited to a penny rate, a provision under which the State undertakes only half of the estimated annual loss. We have already before us extensive proposals under this arrangement from the London County Council, from Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Nottingham, Bradford and several other towns. \*\*\*\*\*

#### A £6 SUBSIDY FOR 20 YEARS

Now I come to Clause 2, which deals with various methods in which LOCAL AUTHORITIES MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, and I would remark here that we contemplate that the annual loss on houses built under this Bill will be, according to the locality up to double the equivalent of the £6 subsidy which the State is to provide, and the extra loss, therefore, will have to come as a contribution from the local authority out of the rates, but it will be observed that here we have exactly reversed the scheme which was adopted under what is known as the Addison plan. Under the Addison plan, the liability of the local authority was limited, but the liability of the State was unlimited. Under this plan it is the other way round, and the LIABILITY OF THE STATE CANNOT EXCEED THE £6 PER HOUSE PER ANNUM FOR 20 YEARS. The local authority has got to find whatever else may be necessary to make up the loss, and I think it will be agreed that that is a far better plan than the old one, because the local authority will now have a direct incentive to economy.

## ECONOMY ENCOURAGED

I have enough experience of local authorities to know that the best of them are not as careful, when they are dealing with money which is provided for them by the State, as when they are dealing with money which they themselves have to raise, and since, under this plan, any extravagance, any wastefulness, will mean simply an increased charge on the local authorities, they will have every reason to watch most carefully that their money is spent well and economically. I do not wish to claim any credit for myself for the adoption of this plan, which did not originate with me. It originated I think, with my right hon. Friend the Member for West Swansea as Minister of Health\*. It was adopted afterwards by local authorities at what was called the Manchester Conference. It was revived again by my predecessor, Sir Arthur Boscawen, and it has received the finishing touches from me. To complete the circle of benevolent godfathers, it only now wants the blessing of Dr. Addison.

### LUMP SUM SUBSIDY TO BUILDERS

Subsection (3) of Clause 2 specifies three different ways in which assistance may be given to private enterprise by local authorities. The first of these is what is called the LUMP SUM METHOD. It is one which is, I think, particularly favored by builders because it is administratively simple; it is clean; once it is given it is done with, and there is no further trouble about it; and I may point out that it is a method which may also be perhaps advantageously applied in dealing with public utility societies. This method of subsidy was adopted in one of the late schemes, and it is generally believed that it led to great abuses. I think that those abuses have been exaggerated, but it did lead to abuses. It was given, no doubt, to certain houses which were not at all the houses which it was intended to produce by the scheme, but, as far as I can make out, there were not more than something like 15%, at the outside, of the houses provided under the subsidy which were of that character. I would point out that we have tried to safeguard ourselves from any such abuse

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\* *Sir Alfred Mond (Editor).*

in this Bill and it will be seen that, before approving proposals under this Clause, the Minister has to be satisfied that there is need for such houses in the area of such authority, and that the need cannot be met without assistance.

### AN ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION THROUGH TAX EXEMPTION

The second method is one which permits the LOCAL AUTHORITY TO REFUND OVER A PERIOD OF TIME A PORTION OR THE WHOLE OF THE RATES\* UPON THE NEW HOUSES. That is a proposal which has received a good deal of advertisement, because of the proposal of rate exemption, and a great many people have been affected by it, and have even suggested that it ought to be applied compulsorily. I, personally, should consider that it was an unwarrantable interference with the autonomy of local authorities, and when I am told that a plan of this kind has been extremely successful in New York,\*\* I would warn the public against accepting as applicable to this country conditions in another country where methods of taxation are very different from what they are here. As a matter of fact, there has been a general boom in building in the United States, which has not occurred only where this plan has been in operation. Of course, any subsidy big enough will stimulate building, and exemption from rates is really only a form of subsidy; but it is a concealed subsidy, which, to my mind, is the most objectionable of all subsidies, and, personally, I must say I do not at all approve of the idea. I would point out, however, that what I referred to in this Bill is not exemption from rates. It is merely an annual contribution from the local authority in respect of a house, instead of a lump sum, and the only reason for attaching it to the rates is to tie up that annual payment to a particular house, instead of to a particular individual.

### ADVANCES BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO AID HOME PURCHASE

The third method is to ENCOURAGE HOUSE PURCHASE THROUGH BUILDING SOCIETIES. I do not anticipate that any very great use will be made of this particular method, seeing that the class of house which is in question is not likely to

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\* *Local taxes (Editor).*

\*\* *See article, page 152.*



be inhabited by people who would be in a position to purchase their own dwelling-house. Nevertheless, I want to give the utmost possible latitude to local authorities to try different methods which may be applicable to different localities, and I think that is so important that I have included this method in the Bill, and it is possible that one might be able to add to this method by a provision which would allow the local authority to give assistance to public utility societies by means of an annual subsidy, as well as by that method in the first paragraph of the Sub-section which enables them to give a lump sum.

### AID TO EMPLOYERS' HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Clause 3 is designed to meet the case of CERTAIN PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETIES FORMED BY RAILWAY COMPANIES or by associations such as that with which Sir Tudor Walters is connected. These Societies do not want to be tied up to the local authorities. They are quite willing to take upon themselves that part of the contribution which would be given by the local authority, and, seeing that they really can make a very substantial contribution to the total of the houses which will be available under the Bill, I think it is wise to make this special provision for them, and to allow us to deal directly with them.

That is really the end of that part of the Bill which deals with the subsidy provisions. I am convinced that, under that provision, we shall get a very considerable number of houses built in the course of the next few years. There is only one thing that could stop them and that would be a great rise in prices.

### BUILDING MATERIAL PRICES TO BE CONTROLLED

I have already appointed a Committee, as the House knows, and I have been at some pains in the composition of that Committee to see that it shall include men who are in a position, I think, to effect its purpose. I do not think I need say more about that question to-day than to repeat what I have said before. WE DO NOT INTEND THAT THIS GREAT, FRESH BURDEN UPON THE TAXPAYER SHALL BE DIVERTED FROM THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH IT IS INTENDED, IN ORDER TO ENRICH A FEW INDIVIDUALS. I believe that my Committee, which will

be meeting in the course of a few days, will be able to furnish this House and the public with that information which will bring to bear the first of those great forces about which the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite was speaking this afternoon in asking leave to introduce his Bill. We shall be able to mobilise public opinion and focus it against any attempt of any abuse, and while I hope it may not be necessary to resort to more drastic steps, I shall not hesitate, if the Committee give me reason to suppose it is necessary to have further powers, to come to this House and ask for them, or for anything which will safeguard us from an abuse of this subsidy.

### LOANS TO INDIVIDUALS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

I come now to the powers which it is proposed to give to local authorities to facilitate building without State assistance, and I would call attention to Clauses 5 and 17, the latter of which amends the Small Dwellings (Acquisition) Act, and I think they can be conveniently taken together, as they cover very much the same ground. It will be seen that these Clauses apply not only to the houses with which I have been dealing, but to the houses of a much larger type, and, in fact, they reach the type of house which is generally occupied by persons of the middle-class and superior artizan class. We are hoping that, under these Clauses, we may help these people to help themselves by PROVIDING THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WITH POWER TO MAKE ADVANCES TO THEM, TO ASSIST THEM TO BUILD HOUSES AND TO PURCHASE HOUSES FOR THEMSELVES. I have an hereditary interest in the Small Dwellings (Acquisition) Act, which, somehow or other, has never fulfilled the anticipations formed of it, and, by the provisions of Clause 17, by the removal of some of the restrictions which have hampered it, by making it applicable to houses of a greater value, and to houses in course of construction, as well as those already constructed, we hope to make it more popular, and to see it more widely adopted by local authorities.

### SIMILAR LOANS TO PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETIES

Clause 5, as I said, is similar in its purpose, but it will be noticed that it is temporary in character, and that it goes further than Clause 17. It extends these powers of making

advances, not only to persons who intend to occupy their houses, but to bodies of persons who construct or undertake to construct. That, of course, is intended to bring in the PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETIES. The estimated value of the house in respect of which advances can be made is raised to £1,500, and we have added a provision, which is intended to meet a set of circumstances which has frequently been brought to our notice. It is the custom of building societies to lend not more than 75% of the value of the house, and we are told—I am sure it is true—that there are many people who would be glad to buy a house, but that they cannot find the remaining 25%. We think that if the local authorities are willing to provide a part of it, say, another 15%, that will bring into operation quite a considerable number of people who have a certain amount of money at their disposal, but not quite enough. From that source, again, we shall get a considerable increase in the number of houses to be built. I regard this Clause as more or less experimental. It only runs, as I have said, until September, 1925, but I shall watch it with interest, and if it proves successful, I see no reason why its provisions should not be incorporated in a further Amendment of the Small Dwellings (Acquisition) Act.

### ENCOURAGING CONVERSION TO FLATS

I would like to call attention to Sub-section (1 c) of Clause 5, because it deals with another matter, which has been the subject of considerable controversy. There are a great number of empty houses, which, apparently, cannot be sold, and cannot be let, and a good many of those houses would instantly be occupied if they could be converted into flats or maisonettes, but the owner is restrained from incurring the expense in making the alterations which would be necessary, by the knowledge that if he did so his converted house would at once have its rates raised. Therefore this is a provision under which the LOCAL AUTHORITY CAN PRACTICALLY KEEP THE RATES OF A CONVERTED HOUSE OF THAT KIND WHERE THEY ARE, and the local authority would be no worse off, because all the necessary services have already been provided *ex hypothesi*, and, if I am correctly informed, this provision, if adopted by local authorities, will probably result in the conversion of a considerable number of houses, and a consequent addition to the available accommodation.

## THE PLIGHT OF THE PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETY

There are only four more Clauses to which I am going to make a brief passing notice. First of all, there is Clause 6, Sub-section (2), which is designed to give some ASSISTANCE TO EXISTING PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETIES. I have a good deal of sympathy with these public utility societies. They were called into existence at a time when the most urgent appeals were being made for the erection of more houses, and I think there is little doubt that at the time it was intended to put them in practically the same position as the local authority by the assistance which was given to them from the State. Of course you cannot apply exactly the same method to a public utility society. You cannot limit it to a penny rate, but the assistance which is given by way of contribution towards the charges amounts to 50% up to 1927, and thereafter to 30%, and I believe it was thought that assistance was to put them in the same position as the local authorities. What happened? Costs went up enormously, and, particularly, among other things, the rate of interest which they had to pay on the capital they borrowed went up.

The result is, that many, if not most, of these societies to-day find themselves in a position where they cannot reduce their rents without going into bankruptcy, and they cannot let their houses unless they reduce their rents. As I say, I think they are deserving of a great deal of sympathy, and thus Sub-section (2) is designed to give them further assistance. I have not been able to put in an exact figure, because our negotiations are not yet quite complete, but I am hoping that I shall be able, when we get into Committee upstairs, to put in a figure which will preserve most of these societies, if not all, from the consequences which otherwise would befall them, and enable them to continue their useful work.

## A FUND FOR COMPULSORY REPAIRS

I will pass to Clause 10, paragraph (c). Those who are familiar with the Housing Acts know that the local authority is able in certain circumstances, if the landlord will not or cannot carry out the repairs to a house, notice of which has been served on him by the local authority, the local authority can do the work itself and charge the landlord with the cost. But the local author-



ity cannot borrow for that purpose. They must execute these repairs out of revenue, and that hinders very considerably their undertaking of repairs. This provision ENABLES THEM TO BORROW FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPAIRS and I hope it will facilitate their operations in that way in the future.

### STANDARD BYE-LAWS

Clause 12 is one which deals with bye-laws. There are still antiquated bye-laws in force in the areas of nearly every local authority. These bye-laws hamper and impede the building of houses, especially at a time when costs are so high. Perhaps the local authorities in some cases are a bit antiquated, too, at any rate, they do not seem to be able to get up steam enough to frame new bye-laws for themselves. So it is provided in Clause 12 that the MINISTER MAY DEVISE A SET OF MODEL BYE-LAWS and local authorities may, by simple resolution, adopt that code and thereby save themselves the trouble of going into the details of a special code of their own.

### TOWN PLANNING POSTPONED THREE YEARS

Lastly, I mention Clause 16, which EXTENDS THE TIME within which, under the Act of 1919, local authorities must submit TOWN PLANNING SCHEMES. I do not think I shall be accused of any want of interest in town-planning, but many local authorities have been very busily occupied with post-War problems, and as I know from experience, the preparation of town-planning schemes is a very long and complicated affair. There is another point. There has been considerable development in recent years of Regional Town Planning as opposed to town planning applied only to the area of one authority. It is extremely desirable that Regional Town Planning should be extended. It enables the local authority to cover a wider area and to take a broader and more statesmanlike view of the needs of the future. But that needs time and therefore, at the request of the local authorities, and with my express approval, we are proposing to extend the time further within which it is necessary for these schemes to be submitted to us. \*\*\*\*\*

On my part, I think I may undertake that, while of course I could not give way on anything which I really regard as vital to the main principles of the Bill, I am not so conceited as to think the Bill is perfect as it stands, and I am perfectly ready

to listen to and, so far as I can, to meet any Amendments which may be put forward by hon. Members, so long as they are put forward in a constructive spirit and with a genuine desire to improve the Bill.

## CRITICISM OF THE BILL

There has been a very general criticism of the measure both by supporters of the Government and its political opponents. *The Architects' Journal* in a recent editorial says:

Regarded frankly as a measure of idealistic statesmanship we do not consider that this Bill equals its predecessor of 1919. The latter failed owing to faulty administration and industrial troubles; nevertheless, we think that this Bill will be productive of houses, and houses of a kind for which there is the greatest demand. The terms "parlor" and "non-parlor" do not appear in the Bill; instead there are limits of superficial area to which the subsidy applies, a minimum of 620 feet and a maximum of 850 feet super.

Much will depend upon the exact wording of the regulations governing the method of measurement; thus, whether the superficial area is measured within or without the containing walls, whether outbuildings are included or excluded, and the like, will make a very great difference in the amount of accommodation which can be planned. But the kind of house which these limits suggest is one having a kitchen-scutlery, with, perhaps, a small washhouse adjacent, in which the work of the house will be done, a larder, fuel storage, a closet, a good-sized living room, which will be the main room of the house, three bedrooms, and a bathroom. This, we contend, is a type of house for which there is a great demand. It is certainly the smallest house compatible with decent living, but with really skillful planning, with proper equipment and fittings, so that the occupiers can dispense with as much bulky furniture as is possible, and good workmanship, such a house is no perpetuation of slum conditions as has been insinuated, but an asset to the nation. The Minister has very wisely refrained from specifying the exact accommodation which these houses are to comprise. Some may, perhaps, contain a small parlor, kitchen, and scullery, and 2 bedrooms, others 3 bedrooms, or even 4. Mankind,

both in its occupation and its tastes, is too diverse to be ordered into uniformly arranged houses. The Bill has been rightly criticized because it does not help the middle classes, but it must be remembered that the acutest need is to ease housing for the very poorest, and this we think the Bill will do. A more serious criticism is that the provisions of the Bill place too heavy a burden on local authorities. The taxpayer is saved at the expense of the ratepayer.

It will be noted that no standards of lay-out or design are indicated. Indeed, the control that is to be exercised over the eligible houses appears to be almost negligible. That this is possible is a very real tribute to the preceding Act of 1919. To pass such an act 4 years ago would have been impossible; as it is, there is a very grave risk that many of the houses, even those built by local authorities, will be badly designed and badly disposed. But generally speaking we think that the lessons inculcated by those administering the last Act will not be forgotten. Thanks to that much-abused Act the nation's whole attitude towards housing has been changed. Every local authority, every housing committee, and every surveyor has had an opportunity of benefitting from the knowledge of persons who had made housing a life's study.

The nation, in fact, may be said to have undergone an intensive course of instruction in housing. It remains to be seen whether it has learnt its lesson, and is now able to act alone.

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On the whole we think the measure will be productive of houses, both municipally and privately, houses of the kind for which there is the greatest need, and at no exorbitant cost. Our only anxiety is as to the design of the houses and their lay-out.

Another leading architectural magazine, *The Builder* of London, commenting on the measure is much less considerate in its criticism. After severely criticizing the provision which limits the subsidy to houses of a certain size it says:

Our indictment does not end here. The Bill contains no guarantee that slums will not be erected, and we regard it as a clear and vital principle of Government that public money should be spent for the public good. Safeguards in this

direction are, one would have thought, essential, and here we find them entirely neglected. No limit is set on the number to the acre, and in this direction a statutory limit would have been acceptable to everyone. We cannot conceal our astonishment at this amazing Bill, since it has been generally understood that the Ministry of Health would be kept free from the reactionary tendency that has been visible elsewhere. This measure cannot fail to reflect on the Government's chances of a prolonged life, since it will rightly be considered that any Government that can contemplate such a measure is a public danger, no matter how much the Bill may be altered by force in its passage through the House.

### WHAT BUILDERS THINK OF THE BILL

That the bill is likely to achieve its main purpose, viz., the encouraging of private enterprise to once more occupy the field of building private houses for the people of England, seems likely, if one can judge by the fact that the bill commends itself in general to the practical house builders of England.

Mr. Norman McKellen, Secretary of the National Federation of House Builders, in a recent public statement said :

The bill is a good one, and if it is amended in accordance with certain suggestions we have to offer, it should prove of great national importance.

### AS IT STRIKES AN OBSERVER

A disinterested but thoughtful student of the situation in England who is unusually qualified to understand the situation comments as follows on the new Housing Policy of the Government :

As regards the present position, the new Housing Bill is a perfectly honest attempt of Conservatism to meet a recognized evil. It is not, I think, at all a case of the Tories stealing the Whigs' clothes while they are bathing. It contains a reluctant admission that in certain cases the housing shortage can only be met by municipal action, but it concentrates on all possible methods for assisting private enterprise. This assistance is to be given through Local Authorities mainly for the reason that the Govern-



ment dare not multiply officials at the Ministry of Health.

The main storm-centre at present is the limitation of houses to be assisted by Subsidy to those of below 850 ft. floor area. The assumption of the people who are damning the Government for standardizing a non-parlor house is apparently that a very large number of houses will be produced by the present policy. Personally, I doubt very much whether this will be the case, and I would rather see an immediate output of non-parlor houses than a smaller output of parlor-houses, which would have to be let at a rent which would make sub-letting almost unavoidable. If, of course, the policy produces a very large number, then something ought to be done definitely to encourage the building of 5-roomed houses, but I do not feel that the parlor question is the first point to be considered.

You will have seen in the bill that assistance is to be given to Public Utility Societies on the same terms as is given to local authorities, and the value of this will depend entirely on what conditions for assistance are laid down by the Ministry's regulations under Section 1.

At present these conditions are left very vague. I believe that the intention of the Government is to hand out the subsidy with the lowest possible inquiry or supervision, and that for this reason, if for no other, there will be no insistence on the subsidy being a contribution to a loss incurred.

This may mean in some cases that Local Authorities will actually derive a profit from housing, but these cases will be rare. If the ratio of rent to cost is such that there is a loss in addition to the deficit covered by the subsidy, local authorities will obviously not build a large number of houses. Some Local Authorities will take a political line and refuse to build houses of a standard lower than that that they think proper. Other Authorities will, of course, declare that their business is only to meet the need of people now living in their own areas, and will not build for the overflow from adjoining districts which are overcrowded but have no available sites. You will have noticed also that the compulsory town planning period is extended from three years to six.

Altogether, I feel that we are in for an interesting two years, in which private enterprise will be tried out, and if it fails will fail finally as the recognized organ of house supply.

### HENRY ALDRIDGE'S VIEWS

Henry Aldridge, Secretary of the National Housing and Town Planning Council, has the following to say:

For the past 18 months a fierce gale has been blowing with regard to the policy of municipal housing. But we have never lowered our flag and we have kept the head of the ship to the wind and now we are coming through the gale into smoother waters.

To drop all metaphors, may I say that the faith that we have in the soundness of the municipal policy is being fully justified. Henceforward the movement will enter on a new phase and I hope we shall be able as a country to carry through some pioneer work in the cleansing of our towns and villages from the century-old neglect which disgraces them.

The National Housing and Town Planning Council, of which Mr. Aldridge is the executive officer, through its Executive Committee, in preparation for a Conference to be held by it the early part of this month, has focussed public attention on what it considers 5 main points in the Government's Housing Bill which require public discussion and which should be embodied in the form of amendments to the measure by Parliament. These 5 main points may be summarized as follows:

1. The extent to which the annual grant of £6 for 20 years will be adequate or otherwise to secure vigorous constructive action by local authorities in industrial village areas with great housing needs and small rateable values, in the industrial areas of Scotland and in purely rural areas.

2. The inadequacy of the standards of maximum and minimum accommodation in the houses to be made the subject of State and municipal aid.

3. The need for the extension of the proposal relative to private enterprise in order to give State and municipal subsidies to occupying owners under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act and to tenants of Public Utility Societies.

4. The need for avoiding any repetition of the misuse of lump-sum grants to private persons which characterised the administration of the Act of December 1919.

5. The framing of conditions under which the new houses are to be built, more especially with regard to the situation of the houses, the lay-out of the land and the general amenity of development.

#### AMENDMENTS LIKELY TO BE MADE

From the public discussion that has been had since the introduction of this measure on April 11th and further announcements made by spokesmen of the Government, both in published statements and in Parliament, it is quite evident that the bill will be amended in Committee so as to meet especially the objections that have been made to the small size of house that would receive the subsidy and to the failure to limit the number of houses to the acre.

The Minister of Health in a recent official statement on this point announced that he was in favor of maintaining a limitation of 12 houses to the acre in districts where land is comparatively cheap, and allow as many as 20 houses to the acre where sites have been partly developed.

It seems likely also that the maximum size of house to receive the subsidy will in all probability be increased to 950 feet, instead of the proposed maximum of 850 feet, thus permitting a parlor of sufficient size.

That the Government will be strongly supported in this measure is quite evident from the various votes that have already been had in Parliament on a number of amendments to it. On May 2nd, when the debate on the bill was continued, an amendment to exclude Scotland from the bill was defeated by a vote of 247 to 130. A further amendment to delete the subsidy altogether was defeated by 208 votes to 97.

## THE CONTROL OF BUILDING RINGS

The Minister of Health announced recently in the House of Commons that in conjunction with the President of the Board of Trade, he intended to set up a Committee with the following terms of reference:

To be a Committee to survey the prices of building materials, and to receive and consider complaints in respect thereof, and to report from time to time to the Minister of Health and the President of the Board of Trade as to the facts and, in particular, as to the extent to which in any case the price appears to be unduly high by reason of the operation of any trade combination, trust or agreement.

The personnel of this Committee has recently been announced. Headed by Sir Halford Mackinder as its Chairman and comprising representatives of building employers, organized labor, housing experts from the Ministry of Health, engineers, and other representative groups, the Committee can be said to be a thoroughly representative one. Among its members may be mentioned particularly Sir Theodore Chambers, Chairman of Welwyn Garden City, Stephen Easten, former President of the National Federation of Building Trade Employers, George Hicks, President of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, Sir Charles Ruthen, Director-General of Housing of the Ministry of Health and others equally experienced and skilled.

Commenting on the appointment of this Committee recently the *Building News* (London) has this to say:

If Sir Halford Mackinder's Committee is simply to sit in a room at the Ministry of Health for two or three days a week and examine witnesses over a table in the desultory manner that has been practiced by recent committees, the whole procedure will be largely a waste of time. The Government, in fact, if they intend seriously to tackle this problem, which affects every grade in the building trade, will probably have to face the question sooner or later as to the powers that they are prepared to give to the Committee.

We ourselves frankly confess that the evidence before us, although it makes clear that associations do exist, by no means justifies the wild accusations of profiteering that



have been made in certain quarters. So far as we can ascertain, the associations do not exist mainly for the purpose of keeping up prices, but to increase business efficiency by the regulation of the conditions of labor, traffic and insurance; to prevent dishonest practices; to standardize materials; and to take collective action for the purpose of developing foreign trade. So far as prices are concerned, in one or two instances members of trade associations are known to be the worst offenders in quoting absurdly low prices against other members of the so-called "combine".

But the public mind is at present full of mistrust with regard to the activities of trade associations, and whether this be well founded or not, the ultimate effect is bad. For that reason we welcome the appointment of the Committee, and trust that all complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated, so that either the suspicions may be dispelled or the true facts ascertained.

## THE DEATH OF AN ENGLISH HOUSING REFORMER

Those Americans who attended the Garden Cities and Town Planning Conference held in England in 1914, just prior to the outbreak of the War, and many other Americans who have for years past been actively interested in the British housing movement, will learn with regret and a sense of personal loss of the death of Frederick Litchfield a few months ago.

Mr. Litchfield can best be described as dynamic, for the impression one retains most vividly of his personality is his unbounding energy and enthusiasm.

He was most closely associated in the public mind with the development of Co-Partnership Housing and it was largely due to his energy and initiative that the Co-Partnership Tenants' movement developed to the extent that it has in England.

In the early days of Letchworth he organized excursions to the first cottage exhibition and coming in touch with Mr. Henry Vivian and others he became Secretary of the Co-Partnership Tenants' movement then developing at Ealing, one of London's suburbs. The organization of Garden City Tenants' followed. Next Hampstead Garden Suburb and Liverpool engaged his attention. As a raiser of funds for these enterprises he had few equals. He rendered a very distinct service to the Garden City

movement in its earlier years in stimulating public interest in both the British and the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, and was particularly active in the development of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

## THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

In the United States where, notwithstanding the housing shortage, the enactment of tax exemption laws to stimulate the building industry, the high price of building materials and numerous other features, wages in the building trades have not only kept up to a pre-war level but have constantly been increasing, until today they have reached so prohibitive a figure that "buyers' strikes" all over the country are beginning to appear, and millions of dollars worth of contemplated building projects are being withheld from the market until labor can assume a more reasonable attitude.

In striking contrast to this situation, is the situation which the building industry in England has been going through during the past 4 months. There a serious crisis has been pending ever since last January, and, until recently, it looked as if a great building strike affecting the building industry throughout England threatened.

The main points at issue in this controversy were the following:

(1) To extend the working week to 47 hours for 8 months of the year, 44 hours for 2 months and 41½ hours for the remaining 2 months.

(2) A reduction of 20% in wages effective as of March first, last.

Around these two points a fierce controversy has raged and many meetings and conferences have been held between the employing builders and the workers in the building trades.

After months of discussion a breakdown of the building industry has been averted by an agreement on the part of both parties to the dispute to submit the questions involved to arbitration, to be decided by an arbitrator appointed by the Lord Chief Justice, with two assessors.

In addition, the workmen are to vote upon the question of whether they are willing to accept longer hours which will also be submitted to arbitration, if necessary.

Apparently one of the chief points at issue is the validity of the National Wages and Conditions Council Agreement. If the workmen's contention is sustained, viz., that this Agreement holds good until March, 1924, wages will remain at their present standard and the only question then remaining will be the question of increasing the working hours which will be determined, by a ballot among the men.

If the arbitrator on the other hand should decide that the present wage scale expired *this* March, then there will have to be an agreement upon a new wage basis.

The dispute is a most interesting one. Speaking for the employers' point of view, Mr. Stephen Easten of Newcastle summarized the employers' case. He said that the 10% wage reduction and the increase of hours were essential if the houses that the country needs are to be built; that the shortage of houses and the unemployment in the building trade were due to the fact that the cost of producing houses was beyond the reach of those who had to pay for them.

He added:

A high rate of wages in one industry could only be maintained at the expense of other industries. In the engineering and shipbuilding yards in the North of England building operatives were working 47 hours for 51s., which was slightly more than the Federation was now offering. Mr. Easten claimed that if the employers' original proposal of 20% reduction had been accepted they would have absorbed not only all the unemployed in the building trade, but all those in the subsidiary trades who were out of work because of the slackness of building.

Speaking from the point of view of the men, Mr. George Hicks, the able and scholarly President of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, at the beginning of this dispute said in part:

The operatives are naturally as much interested in the position of the industry as the employers, but the facts are that while wages of building operatives have been reduced from 30% to 40%, the cost of building materials has dropped only 9 points. The greater part of building costs direct is represented by materials, and it is strongly felt that relief to the industry should first come in the direction of breaking

down these unjustifiably high prices. \*\*\*\*\* Employers fail to understand the psychology of the workers, if they imagine that, with 120,000 men out of work, increased hours for those in work are to be viewed with toleration. Bitter experience has taught the workers that low wages and long hours are mutual factors of decline in their status.

One of the interesting features connected with this building trade situation has been the urgent need of houses to be built, for which all England is clamoring,—and chiefly the working people of England—and along with it the large number of building trade workers who are unemployed.

According to official figures furnished by the Minister of Health under date of February 26th, the number of men in the building trade then unemployed was 136,261. On December 18th, last, there were a total of 142,292 workers in the building trades unemployed and receiving the Unemployment Dole from the Government.

## RENT RESTRICTION

An excellent object lesson of the dangers inherent in Government interference with private business and of the utter futility of attempting to set at defiance principles of economic law has been afforded to students of public questions for the past 3 years by the difficulties which England has become involved in through its well-meant attempt to find relief for its serious housing shortage.

Probably no more striking illustration of these dangers and difficulties could be had than have been furnished by recent happenings in that country.

Greatly to the surprise of the whole country, the Government a few weeks ago suffered serious defeats three times in succession in a series of bye-elections in which it appears that the chief political issue was the failure of the Government to grapple adequately, from the point of view of the electorate, with the problems involved in the regulation of rents. The most serious of these defeats at the polls resulted in the unseating of the Minister of Health, Sir A. Griffith-Boscawen, who received a very heavy adverse vote, with his resultant downfall and retirement from the Cabinet.

During the War the so-called Rent Restriction Acts were



passed; as the Government found it essential in order to preserve the morale of its troops in the field, to remove from their minds all anxiety about the welfare of their families at home and to secure their right to adequate shelter.

The Rent Restriction Acts, like those in the United States, were emergency measures and of a temporary nature intended to apply only until the emergency should have passed.

Last July the then Minister of Health appointed a Rent Restriction Act Committee to advise what steps should be taken to continue or amend the Rent Restriction Acts.

An Interim Report was made by this Committee last October. In this Report it recommended that protection of tenants against eviction and against unreasonable increases of rent as afforded by the present Act should *not* be withdrawn when that Act expired in 1923.

After making this Interim Report the Committee was continued and reconstituted with 3 new members and was advised by the Ministry that it need not be bound by the findings of the Interim Report but could consider the whole question *de novo*.

The Committee rendered its Final Report under date of February 5th, last, at a time when the Minister of Health was fighting for his political life. The Report has commended itself neither to the public, to the press, nor to the Government—an attitude reflected without doubt in the recent elections referred to. It was quite evident to the unprejudiced observer that the electorate meant to give a lesson to the Government and to tell it in no uncertain terms what its views were on the subject of de-control of rents.

Once again it is a case of having created a Frankenstein-monster which has gotten beyond control of its creator and threatens to destroy him and others.

Large numbers of people having tasted the benefits of government-control of rents—and many of them having great difficulty in managing to live at all with the increased cost of living—have naturally not viewed with equanimity a proposal to take from them the safe-guarding of the enjoyment of their homes and to allow landlords once more to “charge what the traffic will bear”, especially in view of the utter impossibility of the great mass of the middle-class population finding accommodations within their means.

It is unfortunate that the members of the Committee were so divided in their views. Two Labor members of the Com-

mittee were unable to sign and submitted a minority report in which they say they are at complete variance with many of the views expressed and the conclusions arrived at by the majority. In addition, of the 12 members signing the Majority Report, no less than 8 make reservations on points of greater or less importance, all of which does not tend to inspire public confidence in the findings of the Committee.

The Majority Report finds that:

(1) The Rent Restriction Acts have hindered the supply of houses.

(2) If continued they will prevent the rebirth of confidence in building by private enterprise.

(3) That immediate de-control would lead to severe hardships and grave discontent.

(4) That there must be a transitional period during which houses are to be de-controlled gradually by various groups, commencing with the houses of highest value, at mid-summer of the present year.

The Minority refuses to agree that de-control of rents will stimulate private building and is certain that it would cause severe hardships. It recommends the continuance of rent restrictions until 1930.

It is unfortunate that the Report should not have had a better reception by the public, for it is a careful and conscientious study of an important and difficult question by serious-minded, thoughtful and intelligent men.

The Report discusses such questions as the following:

Increases of Rent; Houses to Which a New Act Should Apply; The Landlord's Right to Recover Possession; The Definition of Alternative Accommodation; The Case of An Owner Requiring Possession for Occupation; Possession Required for Agricultural Workers; Possession of Property That is Being Damaged by the Occupiers; Sub-Tenants and Sub-Letting; Landlord's Liability for Repairs; Furnished Lettings; Key Money and Premiums; Determination of "Standard Rent" and similar questions.

Every student of public questions and every real estate board in the United States—which sooner or later will have this question to face—should obtain a copy of this most im-

portant document and study it with the greatest care. For, while it is addressed to English conditions and deals with English laws, the fundamental principles involved are the same on both sides of the ocean. The Report is contained in a pamphlet of 48 pages (H.M. Stationery Office, Cmd. 1803, price 9d.)

The Government has practically disregarded the recommendations of its own Committee, has introduced a minor bill dealing with some technical aspects of the problem—and postponed the day of reckoning!

## SOME GOVERNMENT HOUSING SCHEMES

The *Architects' Journal* of London has performed a public service not only to students of housing in England, but in America as well, by publishing on January 3rd, a Special "Housing Number" in which many of the best of the Government's housing schemes exemplifying the different styles of houses evolved by different architects and the developments in different parts of England, have been very fully set forth, copiously illustrated with large size photographs of the houses and in most cases site plans of the developments and in many cases typical house plans.

All students of housing will find it advantageous to secure a copy of this issue of the *Architects' Journal* as it will provide a most helpful guide in determining which of the many thousand houses built under the Government plan will repay inspection.

## THE BUILDING GUILDS

Like the Phoenix arising from the ashes of the dead National Building Guilds, Ltd., a new building guild has arisen known as "Guild Housing, Ltd.," with offices and works at Acton about 12 miles from London. A standard code for Guild contractors has been drawn up, and provides among other things for the hiring of capital at a fixed rate of interest without powers of control, but subject to withdrawal at suitable notice; for the payment of wages, as far as possible, during bad weather and for holidays; and for the allotment of all surplus earnings to the improvements of service. Administration is on a salary basis.

Mr. Malcolm Sparkes, Managing Director of Guild Housing, Ltd., recently made the following statement:

I am more than ever convinced that Guild organization can be made to work, and in the new Guild development with which I am connected, we hope to show something of its possibilities.

I believe that labor hiring capital, can do better work than capital hiring labor, but this belief will not be finally justified until its truth is proved on the actual field of production; that is the only convincing test.

Information has recently been received to the effect that the Manchester Building Guild Committee which was the Manchester Committee of the defunct National Building Guild, has decided if it can raise the necessary capital, to establish a new Building Guild. The idea is that it should be a Manchester affair, locally controlled, and the Committee thinks that it can be made a success. It is intended to commence the new company with at least £5,000 in paid up capital in £1 shares.

It will be interesting to see whether the Guild movement still has vitality and whether, notwithstanding the adverse experience this idea has encountered, it can succeed.

## TOWN PLANNING IN ENGLAND

Notwithstanding that it is proposed in the new government Housing Bill to postpone for 3 years, viz., until January 1929, the time within which the various communities throughout England shall submit town planning schemes for the development of their undeveloped areas, there has been a notable recrudescence of town planning throughout all parts of England in recent months—and more especially a development of Regional Planning that is literally epoch-making.

It is because of appreciation by the Government—and more especially of its Minister of Health Neville Chamberlain—of the great importance of Regional Planning that the new government Housing Bill provides for the postponement of the time within which town planning schemes must be submitted. In discussing the Housing Bill on April 24th, Mr. Chamberlain said on this point:



Lastly, I mention Clause 16, which extends the time within which, under the Act of 1919 local authorities must submit town planning schemes. I do not think I shall be accused of any want of interest in town-planning, but many local authorities have been very busily occupied with post-War problems, and, as I know from experience, the preparation of town-planning schemes is a very long and complicated affair.

There is another point. There has been considerable development in recent years of Regional Town Planning as opposed to town planning applied only to the area of one authority. It is extremely desirable that Regional Town Planning should be extended. It enables the local authorities to cover a wider area and to take a broader and more statesmanlike view of the needs of the future. But that needs time and therefore, at the request of the local authorities, and with my express approval, we are proposing to extend the time further within which it is necessary for these schemes to be submitted to us.

#### MR. ALDRIDGE'S NEW BOOK

Among the notable developments in this field is the publication of a book of about 100 pages by Henry R. Aldridge, the far-seeing and energetic Secretary of the National Housing and Town Planning Council, entitled "The Administration of the Town Planning Duties of Local Authorities", supplementing Mr. Aldridge's earlier volume "The Case for Town Planning". In this book Mr. Aldridge traces the development of British Town Planning legislation since 1909, discusses the Scope and Character of the New Town Planning Powers and Duties, the Procedure to be Followed in the Preparation of Town Planning Schemes, the Administration of the Sections Requiring Compulsory Town Planning, the Development of the Regional Planning Movement, the South Wales Regional Survey, the Replanning of Existing Towns and Built-Up Areas, with a chapter on Town Planning and the Housing Problem, another on the Zoning Movement in America and a final chapter giving the French Law concerning the Preparation of Town and Village Planning Schemes.

All students of Town and Regional Planning will wish to avail themselves of this valuable and interesting book dealing

with the technique of the development of Town Planning in England. The book can be obtained from the National Housing and Town Planning Council, 41, Russell Square, W.C.1, London.

## THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH'S MODEL TOWN PLANNING CLAUSES

Town planners the world over will welcome with keen eagerness and with a deep sense of gratitude to Raymond Unwin and George L. Pepler, Town Planning Experts of the Ministry of Health, the publication by the Ministry of Health of the really epoch-making pamphlet of 60 pages entitled "Model Clauses for Use in the Preparation of Town Planning Schemes" issued last February (H.M.S. Printer price 1 s.)

This presentation of the problems involved in the development of Town Planning Schemes in England as required by the present law has a far wider application than merely to England or the administration of that law.

For, it discusses problems with which town planners throughout the United States are vitally concerned, such problems as What to do with Buildings Erected in the Bed of Mapped Streets, the question of Building Lines, of Zoning and numerous allied questions.

Although still leaving, as is both right and inevitable, much to local discrimination, it affords a valuable indication of the lines upon which the Ministry desires town-planning schemes to be prepared. The publication is divided into two main parts: a set of clauses, preceded by an explanatory memorandum. The clauses themselves are grouped under six headings: General, Streets, Building and Building Lines, Reservation of Lands for Open Spaces, etc., General Convenience and Amenity, and Miscellaneous.

The first of these is a short section devoted to definition. The second covers all matters relating to acquisition of land selected for new streets or street widenings; charges, whether against the community at large or against the frontagers; relaxation of bye-laws; diversion of highways. The suggested clauses are collated with the existing germane Acts of Parliament, viz.: The Private Street Works Act of 1892 and the Public Health Act of 1875.

Much of the land earmarked for thoroughfares will not, of course, be required for such purpose for many years. In order, therefore, that such land may not become sterile the owners may erect buildings thereon with the permission of the authority and on the understanding that no compensation is subsequently claimed in connection with the removal of the buildings. It is suggested that three months' notice shall be given to persons interested in the land, and that at the expiration of the time the land becomes, according to circumstances, a public highway or a private street; in either case the authority have the right of entry. This is typical of the clauses comprising the section on streets, the whole of which are designed to enable the authority to keep a strict control over all street development and to obtain ready access to land dedicated to streets or street widenings.

Part III, Building and Building Lines, deals, of course, *inter alia*, with Zoning. In this matter a useful discrimination is maintained, and Zoning is divided into two kinds: Zoning by density, and Zoning by Use. For the purpose of assessing the former the Ministry suggest the introduction of a system of "land units," the density of which is to be calculated in terms of dwelling houses for single families which are known as "building units," every class of building having its equivalent in terms of building units. The land unit is a loose measurement, the only indication of its extent being a maximum limitation of 7 acres.

The clauses suggest that the authority should organize a system by means of which owners can declare land units, and can thus ascertain in advance exactly what restrictions and limitations govern the development of their land, and where it is proposed to develop an area by the sale of building plots a plot plan can be previously submitted to the authority so that the exact number of buildings to be erected under the density restrictions can be ascertained and the proposed plot divisions approved prior to sale.

The "Use" Zoning is a simpler matter. The various Zones: residential, special business, special industrial, general industrial and business, etc., are indicated on the scheme map, and in regard to each Zone buildings are grouped under three headings: buildings that may be erected without consent, buildings for the erection of which the authority's consent is required, and buildings which may not be erected.

The only buildings which fall under the last heading are "buildings for noxious industry." Where application is made to the authority for erection of a building of a kind other than that which is predominant in the Zone the authority must advertise its intention before giving consent in order that adjoining owners and interested persons may have opportunity to object.

In this Section the Ministry fail rather to emphasize sufficiently the desirability of Street Zoning, without which chaos will ultimately develop. The height of buildings is dealt with, 70 ft. is suggested as a maximum height, with certain exceptions. Building curtilages are treated, and a model table is shown in which the percentage of the area within the curtilage which may be built over is governed by the character of the building and by its height. No terraces may include more than 8 houses without a break of at least 6 ft. And no block shall be erected nearer the owner's boundary than 3 ft.

The clauses dealing with Reservation of Lands for open spaces are few and simple; they contain schedules of the different purposes for which the land may be required, and the methods by which the authority can acquire it.

The fifth part, which is devoted to general convenience and amenity contains only four sections, which deal respectively with safety of traffic, preservation of trees, advertisements, and maintenance of private gardens, and few of the clauses in the sections contribute materially to an increased amenity.

The last part of the publication deals, under the heading of miscellaneous, with agreements, boundary adjustments, recovery of expenses, appeals, compensation and betterment claims, the serving of notice and such like administrative matters which it is as well should be as uniform as possible in order to avoid anomalous situations between adjacent authorities.

## PROGRESS OF TOWN PLANNING SCHEMES

In a statement issued the first of the year by George L. Pepler, Town Planning Expert of the Ministry of Health, Mr. Pepler pointed out that up to November 21, 1922, under the Town Planning Acts, 291 Town Planning Schemes had been commenced by 178 different local authorities covering an area of 781,672 acres. Of these schemes, on January first, 12 had been approved



and 26 preliminary statements had been prepared of which 8 had been approved. At that time 12 Joint Town Planning Committees or Committees on Regional Plan had been established, representing 176 different local authorities comprising some 1,175,000 acres and £32,127,000 of taxable values.

## NOTABLE REGIONAL PLANS

Among the notable regional plans that have been developed may be mentioned those of Manchester, Doncaster, and South Wales.

In our last issue we referred to the Manchester Conference. The Proceedings of this Conference have recently been published and all students of town planning will find it profitable to study them.

Following the series of conferences held in Manchester last fall, the Joint Town Planning Advisory Committee for the Manchester District recently decided to proceed with the preparation of a Regional Plan for their area asking each of the local authorities in the area to contribute for a term not exceeding 3 years a certain proportion of the expense. A small temporary staff has been appointed and for greater efficiency the area being studied has been slightly modified so that it is now not merely a district within a 15-mile radius of Manchester Town Hall, but includes also the area of the Rivers Mersey and Irwell Waterside Joint Committee.

Within this area comprising approximately 707 square miles there are 108 separate local authorities of which 77 are represented on the Joint Regional Town Planning Committee.

## THE DONCASTER REGIONAL PLAN

The literature on Regional Planning has recently been enriched by the issuance of the Doncaster Regional Planning Scheme—a Report prepared for the Joint Committee by Patrick Abercrombie and T. H. Johnson. (Hodder and Stoughton, London, price 10s. 6d.) This book of 100 pages, attractively printed and fully illustrated with maps and views, presents a Regional Plan for the territory within a 15-mile radius of the city of Doncaster. The scheme covers the areas of 8 local authorities totalling 108,165 acres with a population of 139,940.

Every student of Regional Planning will wish to avail himself of this important work which has been carried out with the usual

thoroughness which we have become accustomed to attribute to Professor Abercrombie.

The Report deals with all of those questions which one would expect to be dealt with in a Regional Plan including the Space About the Buildings, the Limitation of Density, Zoning, the Preservation of Features of Beauty, Roads, Railways and Waterways, Civic Centers &c., and in addition deals especially with the question of Subsidence caused by the existence of coal mines underneath part of the area.

## PROGRESS IN SOUTH WALES

Recent reports indicate that substantial progress is being made in the carrying out of the monumental Regional Plan for South Wales developed lately under the leadership of George L. Pepler of the Ministry of Health.

As a result of a conference held a few months ago at Cardiff it was decided that the South Wales Regional Survey Committee should form a Joint Town Planning Committee. Some 16 different local authorities were represented at this conference. It is understood that other groups of local authorities in South Wales are about to take similar action.

## LONDON

Last but not least, there have been recently notable developments in the study of the complicated and multifarious problems involved in a Plan for the London Region.

The Royal Commission on London Government set up by the Government some time ago has recently rendered its Report to Parliament. This Commission had been appointed, not primarily from the point of view of developing a Regional Plan for the London area, but to try and bring order out of chaos, from the governmental point of view, to the 55 independent boroughs and villages bordering upon London but which have no political connection with London, or with one another.

Students of housing and town planning problems in London have recognized for a long time, that no solution could be even attempted for London's housing and town planning problems, until there had first been evolved some scheme for co-ordinating and unifying the various "Londons" which the city known as London now comprises.

One of the difficulties, from a political point of view, involved in this situation has been the fear of the smaller governmental bodies that they were to be swallowed up by the powerful London County Council with its vast undertakings and responsibilities. There has therefore been the difficult question to surmount of local autonomy—a question always difficult to solve politically.

It is not surprising, therefore, though it is somewhat disappointing that the Report of the Royal Commission on London Government should not have advanced this question to any considerable degree. To the unprejudiced observer it would seem to have had the defects which the Scotsman attributes to claret, that "It leaves you just where you were". Perhaps the Commission is to be praised for not having increased the complexity of the present situation.

The Report is distinctly disappointing and does not get "any forrerder". The chief recommendation of the Report is for the establishment of an Advisory Committee for London and the Home Counties; to advise, not the local authorities within that area, but "the appropriate minister" on questions affecting Greater London in relation to Transport, Housing, Town Planning and Main Drainage.

A close student of housing and town planning affairs in London makes the following comment with regard to the Report:

There is no use in trying to get around the fact that the Commission was faced with an almost insoluble problem while London remains its present size. That is why the Majority plumped for what may reasonably be called "no change". The plain fact is that they would hardly know where to start and that most people are afraid of the "London and Home Counties Parliament" idea of Donald and Walsh. In effect they are faced with the fact that a series of towns run into one another around the great town of London, that they are all jealous of losing power to the others or to a central body, and that meanwhile all the services lose tremendously in overlapping and duplication. It is nonsense for them to say that they see no signs of inefficiency, or else it is just politeness.

Meanwhile many of our suburban communities are growing up in a very bad way; shoving all the duties they can on to London, such as provision of libraries, baths, training of teachers, etc.—the usual method being to provide no facili-

ties at all, thus leaving their people to get anything they can from facilities provided by London. This usually goes on until the community is so large that something *has* to be done, and therefore these remarks do not apply to such great areas as West Ham, East Ham, Tottenham, etc. It is in the smaller residential districts that it applies most. Mainly because they are only dormitories. The larger ones are really industrial towns.

The other difficulty is that of getting anything like a municipal patriotism for so large an area and population. Under such circumstances local government tends to become mere bureaucracy, with the people swayed left and right by turns in great mass feelings. It is neither good democracy nor good autocracy. I have great sympathy with the people who rejected the L.C.C. schemes; for, the job is too big for the L.C.C. now and the machine is beginning to count for too much.

The whole difficulty is that local patriotism requires different conditions from those of national patriotism; one needs to know the boundaries of the locality and a good deal of what lies within them, a more intimate knowledge is required than for that of a country, and all this is impossible in London. Even some of the Metropolitan Boroughs are too large for this; the boundaries of Islington and St. Pancras stretch from the Northern Heights of Hampstead and Highgate to nearly the centre of town. This would not be so bad if they were not part of so great a whole but as matters are, people in these boroughs probably have much more intimate connections with other parts of London during most of their working days.

## NEW YORK AND LONDON

Raymond Unwin, the distinguished British Town Planner, recently made a flying visit to America and spent at different times 10 days in New York City studying its planning problems, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, glancing at its problems, so far as the short time at his disposal permitted, and giving to the Committee on Regional Plan of New York the benefit of his impressions.

Recently, upon his return to London, following the example of other distinguished European travellers, he has put on record



his impressions of New York and has interpreted them in terms of his own great metropolitan city, London. An interesting contrast between New York and London, with special reference to Town Planning Problems will be found in Mr. Unwin's article published in the *Building News* (London) of February 2nd.

As was to have been expected, Mr. Unwin rightly discovers the disadvantages of New York's high buildings, of its gridiron plan and its undue concentration of population. He was especially impressed with the clogging of New York's streets in the main portions of Manhattan by the use of the streets for vast numbers of motor cars, a situation never contemplated when the city was originally laid out.

All persons interested in the planning problems of the two greatest centers of population in the world will find Mr. Unwin's impressions most interesting reading.

## A NEW CHARING CROSS BRIDGE

The attention of Londoners has recently been directed toward one of London's great traffic problems in connection with the building of a new bridge across the Thames to take the place of the present Charing Cross Bridge, which—as all visitors to London know—is at present an ugly railway bridge that enters the centre of London.

The "London Society", an association devoted to the welfare of London—and which under the leadership of its Secretary Mr. Percy Lovell is devoting in recent years more and more of its attention to Zoning and Town Planning problems—has recently had prepared a series of sketches and maps for a new bridge to take the place of the present Charing Cross Bridge, involving a re-study of the traffic problems and a re-arrangement of the traffic facilities involving the very heart of London itself.

These various plans and drawings have recently been placed on exhibition by the "London Society" and have attracted widespread interest.

In commenting on these studies the *Garden Cities & Town Planning* magazine says:

As soon as a man appears on the banks of a river it becomes for him a highway, a water supply, a place of settlement, an amenity and a means of defence. It also becomes an obstacle which by ford, ferry, or bridge he must cross. London River is such an obstacle, and has afforded for hun-

dreds of years a constant problem to the citizens who would pass from side to side.

## DUBLIN OF THE FUTURE

In our last issue we referred to the exhibition of plans for the reconstruction of Dublin prepared by a committee of citizens of that city and recently shown in Edinburgh. Since then these plans have been published in book form in an attractive and handsome volume entitled "Dublin of the Future" (Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., boards 21s., paper 17s. 6d.) The plans presented there are those with which Professor Patrick Abercrombie and his colleagues won the first prize in the International Competition held in 1914.

W. McG. Eagar, Secretary of the Garden Cities & Town Planning Association in reviewing this report in *The Building News* (London) says of it:

On the whole there is a refreshing absence of academic idealism in the proposals. "Here," say in effect the authors, "are the main facts of Dublin today, its noble qualities and its unworthiness. The city will probably grow, to become perhaps one or two million inhabitants; and here is a plan which will make possible the formation of healthy new tissue, and in time will cure some of the existing morbid conditions caused by the errors of the past. Of course the plan will be modified as circumstances which cannot at present be foreseen arise, but the main lines should stand—once they are approved."

"With this report on which to sharpen its teeth the newborn—or re-born—civic consciousness of Dublin should grow apace; and we would wish only that Professor Abercrombie had inserted the idea which will assuredly come some time, though then perhaps too late, that a city of two or even one million people is a monstrosity which town planning, or at least regional planning, should be charged to prevent.

## WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Welwyn Garden City, the latest development along these lines, is making rapid progress, and the latest contract for additional houses includes 93 houses to be built for the

Welwyn Rural District Council at a cost of £ 284 per house. When the cost of the land and improvements at £ 35 per house is added, the total cost per house, after providing for all expenses including professional fees, is £ 328. As the houses are 4 and 5 rooms with bath, hot water supply, electric light and gas for cooking this is a remarkably low price for any country at any time, to say nothing of these abnormal times of high cost of building. What would not the people of America give for houses of this type, complete with land and all improvements at the low price of less than \$1700?

The rent to be charged for these houses is to be 10s. per week including local taxes which it is expected will not entail any loss on the local authorities.

An interesting development at Welwyn in recent months is the increasing number of speculative building firms that are obtaining sites from the Garden City Company and erecting houses on them for sale. As the Company carries on an extensive advertising campaign there has been a very heavy demand for such houses so that they are often sold before completion. When sold, the houses are leased by the Garden City Company direct to the purchasers. At present 9 firms are building under this plan and the types of houses range from the small cottage with two bedrooms to the large family residence costing £2500.

The new School is rapidly approaching completion and one wing has already been occupied by classes. One of the interesting features of this school is the provision for open-air teaching. Extensive playing fields have been secured adjoining the school playground.

The construction of the permanent pumping station in the Mimram Valley is now under way. The first unit of this plant will be sufficient to care for the needs of a population of 10,000 and the first sections of the reservoirs now nearing completion have a capacity of 300,000 gallons.

It will be recalled that one of the cardinal principles of the Garden City movement is that such communities shall be surrounded by an agricultural belt. The New Town Agricultural Guild, formed for the purpose of developing this agricultural belt, now occupies 830 acres of it and is undertaking its intensive cultivation with a view to supplying food-stuffs for the town. In addition to its certified milk supply the Guild now has a large area under fruit cultivation, has

established a model poultry farm and has specialized in the breeding of pigs. Its latest activity is the erection of a range of glass houses for growing tomatoes and cucumbers.

Students of the Garden City movement will wish to obtain copies of the very attractive booklet which has recently been issued entitled "41 Pictures of Welwyn Garden City". This booklet is what its title indicates—a series of pictures with practically no text—showing some of the houses that have already been built, both interior and exterior views, a view of the little Cherry Tree Restaurant in the woods near the station and many attractive and charming views of the beautiful country in and around Welwyn, also views of the Model Dairy, the department store, the city bookshop and other attractive and interesting features of this unique development.

## LETCHWORTH

Progress in the Garden City movement has by no means been limited to Welwyn, the most recent exemplar of that movement.

Letchworth, the first Garden City, has also been making distinct progress, the most interesting event having been the payment of a dividend of 4% on its common stock, so that the scheme is gradually getting upon a sound business basis.\* In view of the splendid progress that has been made recently the Directors anticipate that next year they will be able to pay the full 5% permitted under their articles of association, and that in the near future they will be able to pay off the £ 140,000 of accumulated interest on the common stock.

Students of this development are of the opinion that too conservative a valuation has been placed upon the property by those responsible for its management, and that if an independent valuation were to be made today it would show in all probability assets sufficient to enable the Directors to capitalize the £ 140,000 accumulated dividends, and issue to the additional stockholders shares representing this accumulation.

During the year a large number of shops and business sites have been let and the Urban District Council has completed its scheme for 707 additional houses. There has been a great deal

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\* 4% is the current rate of interest on mortgage investment in England—(Editor).



of building during the past year. The District Council has built 50 houses and there has been a strong demand for private houses and sites. The center of the town has been much improved by the erection of a fine block of property, including the new premises for the new London Joint City and Midland Bank, Ltd. An arcade of 19 shops is in course of erection. A large department store and assembly hall were formally opened this winter. Building is now under way in the factory area and the new Council School is nearing completion. A new water pumping plant has been installed making the total length of the water mains on the estate  $26\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Progress has also been made in connection with the lighting of private houses and developments have been had in both the gas and electric plants.

## EBENEZER HOWARD'S VIEWS ON COMMUNAL OWNERSHIP OF LAND

Communal ownership of land has often been stated by some of its advocates to be one of the cardinal principles of the Garden City movement. Lawrence Veiller in an article on the Garden City movement, entitled "Are Great Cities A Menace", published in a recent issue of the *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada*, in discussing this question said:

Some advocates of the idea have placed rather undue emphasis on the feature of community ownership of land. This feature, however, is in no sense essential to the scheme.

In discussing this question not long ago with Mr. Howard, I asked him point blank to what extent he considered community ownership of land an essential part of the idea. He answered "To no extent," adding that, personally, he believed in it, and pointing out the many advantages accruing therefrom.

But the fundamental idea is just as sound, just as easily applied without this feature, as with it.

I raise this point because it has much importance for the United States. The conditions of land tenure here are so fundamentally different from those that prevail in England, that it would be folly to cling in America to a feature of the Garden City plan that was devised to meet an evil—very real in England—but non-existent here; for, England is a land of tenants so far as the average man is concerned, while America is a country of home-owners.

Ebenezer Howard has recently made a full statement of his views to the Editor of that Journal as follows:

My experience as one of the Founders and Directors of Letchworth and Welwyn has naturally led to certain modifications of my original views, but my position may, I think now be stated thus—first as applied to England and secondly as applied to Canada and the United States.

First: The freehold of any Estate which is to be developed as a Garden City should be retained in one ownership, so that it can be dealt with as a whole. This will naturally involve Zoning—special quarters being set aside for manufacturing, for commerce, for a civic centre, for residences, for agricultural area, etc. Now the effect of such a system of Zoning from the very outset would be quite naturally to increase the value of the land which is to be utilized for these various purposes in quite different degrees. At the same time it practically takes away, for the good of the community and in the interests of all, the ordinary right of a freeholder to do as he will with his own; as for example, having bought land in a residential district, utilizing the site for industrial purposes to the possible great injury of his neighbors. But inasmuch as in England it is extremely difficult to enforce covenants, however clearly and stringently such covenants are framed in the conveyance of land, and as it is essential to prevent land being used in ways such as I have mentioned, we have not parted with the freehold at Letchworth, but in respect of houses, have granted leases of 99 years, and in respect of factories, 999 years, while at Welwyn we are granting leases both for residential purposes and for business purposes of 999 years.

Second: In parts of Canada or the United States where Zoning laws are not in force, I should not see any objection to the actual grant of freeholds in the case of the development of new areas, while naturally the prices charged for sites would vary greatly.

There is another point to which I might draw attention. The general tendency of population has hitherto been towards the great cities, and naturally such a tendency results in enormous increases in ground values which are often not at all created by owners of the land. On the other hand, if that tendency is reversed, as I am convinced it will be ere long,

such vast disparities in the value of land will, I think, tend greatly to disappear. Further, if workers engaged in industries once become accustomed to work also on the land, it would be greatly to their benefit, and to the benefit of all—a method which Mr. Henry Ford so strongly advocates. Then, as the old cities could not afford opportunities to any large extent for this system, the working population would soon learn to prefer towns built upon Garden City lines.

## CONFERENCE ON TOWN PLANNING AND HYGIENE AT STRASBOURG

An International Conference on Town Planning and Municipal Hygiene is to be held at Strasbourg, July 15th to 18th, part of a series of conferences being held in that city to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of the great French scientist Pasteur.

This Conference has been organized by the French Town Planning Society in coöperation with various allied organizations and public officials. The Conference is divided into 4 main sections: Legislation, Plans of Cities, Urban Hygiene and Housing. The preliminary programme recently received announces that the following topics are to be discussed under each one of these classes. Under Legislation: the Status of Town Planning Legislation in France and Foreign Countries, including Town Planning Regulations, Propaganda and the Teaching of Town Planning. This section is presided over by President M. Keppi—the Assistant Mayor of Strasbourg; Vice-President Henry R. Aldridge of England and M. Maukels of Brussels, Secretary M. de Clermont.

Under Plans of Cities the following subjects are to be discussed: Plans for the Improvement and Extension of Cities, Civic Art, Allotments, Garden Cities, Parks and Playgrounds, Workingmen's Gardens, the Platting of Cities. The President of this section is M. Jaussely, Vice-Presidents MM. Mauro and Doctor Berlahe; Secretary M. A.A. Rey, Architect of Paris.

The Third Section deals with Urban Hygiene including such questions as Water Supply, Street Construction and similar questions.

The section on Housing will discuss the Housing Shortage, the Revival of Construction, Measures for the Future, the

Hygiene of the Home and the Improvement of Unsanitary Dwellings.

A Report of the Conference will be printed in 2 languages, entitled "The Status of Town Planning in France and Foreign Countries". In connection with the Conference there will be the usual excursions and dinners and similar meetings. On the first day it is planned to have a visit to the great Hygiene Exhibition which is being held in Strasbourg from May to October to commemorate Pasteur's birth and in the evening of the first day there is to be an informal meeting of delegates for the purpose of getting acquainted. Visits are planned to Mulhouse, to the Industrial City of Dollfus and the Garden Village at some neighboring Potash Mines.

A fee of 25 francs is charged for membership in the Conference which includes a volume of the Proceedings. Final programmes of the Conference can be obtained by addressing the *Société Française des Urbanistes*, 10 rue Lavoisier, Paris, VIII.

## INTERNATIONAL HOUSING CONGRESS AT ROME

In our last issue we announced that the much postponed International Housing Congress would be held at Brussels in August of this year. Recent announcements indicate that this Congress will be held in Rome in September of this year, the Italian Government having given their adherence to the Congress.

## THE RENT CONTROL SITUATION

As was predicted when the Rent Control laws were enacted 3 years ago as an emergency measure, now that the time for their expiration has about come due, an almost overwhelming demand has been made upon the legislatures of those states where such legislation has been enacted, to continue these laws upon the statute books for further periods.

In New York State which led the country in this legislation, and which naturally was the first to feel the demand for laws of this kind in view of the conditions that exist in a great metropolitan city like New York with its 6,000,000 people, the Rent Emergency laws passed at the Special Session of the



legislature in September 1920 and which would have expired in April 1924, have been extended until February 1925.

Not only have the laws for New York City been given an extension of life, but in response to a demand for relief from the other cities of the state, the operation of these laws has been extended to a number of smaller communities, viz., Albany, Amsterdam, Cohoes, Rensselaer, Troy and Watervliet.

During the session of the New York legislature which has recently closed, the representatives of the organized real estate interests of New York City called attention to the fact that the legal basis for the New York Rent Laws was the existence of "an emergency" which the court found in the threatened eviction on October 1, 1920, of 100,000 families in the City of New York and urged that the legislature should appoint a committee to investigate and report as to whether an emergency still exists that would justify the existence of these laws.

The Rent Laws enacted in 1920 were based upon the recommendations contained in the report of the so-called "Lockwood Housing Committee" and this body has been in existence ever since that time continuing its investigations into the housing and building situation. The life of this Committee ended with the present session of the legislature and although the Committee and its counsel strenuously insisted upon the necessity of its continuance, the legislature turned a deaf ear to such requests, and the Committee has ceased to exist.

In place of it there will undoubtedly be created in the office of the State Architect a Housing and Regional Planning Commission to be created under authority of a bill passed at the recent session of the legislature upon the recommendation of Governor Smith, and now awaiting the Governor's signature. One of the duties of this Commission is to make an inquiry into whether an emergency still exists that would warrant the further extension of the Rent Control Laws and the Tax Exemption Law for new buildings. In the meantime the legislature is extending the operation of the Rent Control Laws until February, 1925.

#### IN MASSACHUSETTS

In Massachusetts the Committee on the Judiciary of the

Massachusetts legislature recently reported unanimously bills to extend for one year the emergency laws which allowed judges in eviction cases to permit tenants to continue in occupancy for a period of six months after the decision is made and which also permitted tenants to hale into court landlords who failed to supply adequate heat and other necessities of living.

### IN ENGLAND\*

How dangerous these attempts at interfering with economic law are, and how difficult it is to get rid of such Frankenstein-monsters when once created is admirably illustrated by recent happenings in England.

There the Government recently experienced a series of defeats in 3 successive bye-elections held within a 10-day period—a proceeding said to be unprecedented in parliamentary history. The chief issue in these elections was the recommendation of the Government to allow the Rent Control Laws which expire this June to lapse.

As was naturally to be expected vast numbers of people who were benefitting by these laws resented at the polls the proposal to take away from them the protection which the laws had afforded them.

## RENT RESTRICTION AN INTERNATIONAL QUESTION

That this problem is not one that is confined to the United States is evidenced by the discussions that have been had of it in many European countries. Recently, the Organizing Secretary of the International Garden Cities & Town Planning Federation, Mr. H. Chapman, sent out to persons in the leading countries in Europe a questionnaire on the restriction of rents in which the following 14 questions were asked:

What Legislation Has Been Adopted; To What Houses Does Restriction of Rents Apply; What Are the Restrictions Upon Rent? What Increases Are Allowed; What Protection from Eviction is Given to the Tenant; What Rights Are Given to Sub-Tenants; What Happens

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\* See article, page 124.

to the Tenancy on the Death of a Tenant; What Notice Has to be Given of the Increase of Rent; What Provision is There for Making Landlords Execute Repairs; Is the Payment of "Key-Money" Allowed, ("Key-Money" is a Payment made for the Right to Take up the Tenancy of an Empty House.); What Provision is There for Dealing with Mortgages on Such Property; What Arrangements are There for the Settlement of Disputes; Is Any Portion of the Increase Payable by the Landlord to the State for New Housing; What Have Been the Effects of the Act; Is the Act to be Repealed or Extended? If Already Repealed or Extended Please State Effects.

The publication of the replies to these interesting questions should prove of very great value to all of the countries where this issue has become a live one.

## RENT CONTROL LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES

In connection with the consideration of the question of whether rent control legislation was necessary or desirable in Pennsylvania and more especially for the city of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Housing Association recently made a study of the extent to which attempts had been made throughout the United States to control the evil of excessive rents.

While this study is necessarily not a complete one, the facts disclosed by it are of considerable interest. In response to letters sent to cities reported to have enacted emergency rent legislation a number of replies were received and the Association has analyzed the various measures adopted. The replies indicate two major forms of control; (a) Modification of Landlord and Tenant Laws, and (b) The Creation of Rent Adjustment Commissions.

One or the other of these methods has been tried in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts, Colorado, Delaware, Maine, Wisconsin, the District of Columbia and Portland, (Ore.), Boston, Seattle, Milwaukee, Denver, Akron and Dayton.

## TYPICAL RENT LAWS

The Wisconsin law, like the Washington, D. C. and the Denver laws, empowered a Commission to determine reasonable rents, to prescribe lease forms, to fix damages for violations of leases and to prosecute for non-compliance of orders issued.

The New York, New Jersey and Illinois legislatures and legislatures of other states, changed their landlord and tenant laws thereby enabling tenants to defend themselves by court action, pleading the rent asked unjust and oppressive and, as a complementary control, by restricting the power of the landlord to bring summary dispossession proceedings for non-payment of increased rentals or for any subterfuge that might be attempted to accomplish the same end. These legislatures left the decision to the courts as to what constitutes a reasonable rent.

### COURTS NOT CLOGGED BY RENT CASES

In opposition to rent control, it is alleged that the Courts are clogged by rent cases, but such was not found to be the case, save in rare exceptions.

In practice these laws and Commissions have brought about certain uniform results. Thus the Chicago City Council Committee reports, "The courts in one year disposed of 17,803 law suits involving rents which practically finished the calendar of this classification during the year. Disputes are usually settled on an average within 10 days after complaint." The District of Columbia Rent Commission disposed of 3,046 complaints from December 1st, 1921 to November 30th, 1922. The Denver Commission, during the seven months it was active, handled over 2,000 cases without having had a single appeal taken to the courts. In Manhattan alone, the courts handled during 1922 about 150,000 increase of rent cases and as many cases of summary proceedings for possession of premises, while the City Counsel of Trenton states, "The District Court of Trenton has not been clogged with litigation arising out of tenantry matters."

### RENT LAWS AND NEW DWELLING CONSTRUCTION.

It has been alleged that rent laws restrict building. In no city



where they have been in force has the building programme been retarded. In New York where rent control was most active, the 1922 building programme was one-fourth of the total programme of the country and dwelling construction exceeded that of all other large American cities.\*

Denver writes "The average builder was satisfied with the fairness of the percentage allowed for rents by the Commission" and "the building programme did not suffer."

The Chicago City Council Committee reports "The Illinois Rent Laws in no way discouraged building. Many millions of dollars have been spent in building houses since the passing of this law. Building is going forward in leaps and bounds." Chicago's housing permits in 1922 were 86% over 1921 and 20% over 1916—a banner year for most American cities.

### RENT LAWS EFFECTIVE

Rent laws have been effective where adopted and consistently enforced. Those speculative investors who, as temporary landlords, gouge their tenants have had a warning that they must justify rental increases wherever made. The common experience of Rent Commissions has been that after the Commissions become active the number of cases of outrageously high rents have decreased. Neither courts nor Commissions have restricted rents so that returns fall below a fair earning on the investment. Both have found many cases before them where the increases asked were not excessive. Rent laws have not disturbed legitimate barter between landlord and tenant but they have controlled the new crop of get-rich-quick speculative investors that have arisen because of the emergency created by the housing shortage.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

### RENT INSURANCE

A recent development which may or may not be the outcome of rent control laws is the establishment of a new form of insurance, viz., Rent Insurance. This is a new development in the

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\* The fact should not be overlooked that in New York City along with the rent-control legislation there has been during this period the tax-exemption of new buildings for a 10-year period—(Editor).

real estate field which has been launched within the last few months.

London Lloyd is writing a policy guaranteeing rents for the terms of leases and agreeing to indemnify the landlord against any loss except losses caused by fire. Several of the largest buildings of New York, including the Equitable and the Lawyers' Title and Trust, have had their rents insured under this form of policy. A number of policies have also been issued in Washington, D. C., and Chicago for business buildings and apartment buildings. The premium charged is 75 cents per \$100.

## THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

The situation in the building industry at the present time holds little encouragement for the building of workingmen's houses for some time to come.

As some observers anticipated, the situation today has become worse than it was immediately at the close of the War. While prices of material and labor decreased shortly after that period, they have been constantly rising, until at the present time the construction industry faces a serious crisis.

Owing to the exorbitant demands of Labor in "snow-balling" wages, millions of dollars worth of construction work are being withdrawn until the construction industry can readjust itself and prices return to a more rational basis. With plasterer's demanding \$14 a day, and bricklayers and other workers in the building trades similar amounts, there is little chance apparently for a return to sanity in the construction industry. What the outcome of this situation will be is hard to foresee.

The *New York Herald* commenting editorially on this situation a few days ago had the following to say:

In the non-stop dance of higher wages New York is groggy. The labor organizations in the building trades have tired her out. They may find comparatively fresh partners in other towns. The dancing is done to the music of the trades union bosses. If it is too fast you can drop out and go without your house, your office building or whatever it is you wish to build.

For the moment the building trades unions have the country utterly at their mercy. They hold it in a double grip. The housing shortage has been the nation's greatest deficit

since the war. And instead of finding an increase in skilled labor to meet the deficit we find a decrease in many lines.

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In the ten years between 1910 and 1920 this country gained 14,000,000 inhabitants. Nearly 3,000,000 homes were needed to house the addition. But in the same period the country lost 30,000 bricklayers, 9,000 plasterers, 3,000 roof workers, 13,000 stone-cutters and 25,000 paint and glass workers. These were not factory operatives but building men.

Why did the prosperous month of January, 1920, find 80,000 fewer men in these five well paid trades than had been employed in them ten years before? It was because the bosses of these trade organizations had put in effect their purpose to make their unions close corporations, as exclusive as the most snobbish of clubs.

On the basis of the advance in population the ranks of the bricklayers and stone masons should have increased 25,000 between 1910 and 1920. Due to the resumption of building which almost immediately followed the war there should have been another increase of at least 25,000 men who could have been kept busy on housing; for, the United States was three years behind in that line of work. Yet instead of gaining 50,000 brick and stone masons the country lost 30,000. Applicants for admission to the unions were kept out.

Those figures supply the reason why bricklayers have been making from \$10 to \$20 a day.

"Well," says the Ordinary Citizen, "can't the Federal Government or the State do something about this?" It can, but it doesn't. In the recent session of the legislature of this state a bill was introduced with the intent of ending labor organization monopoly. It was one of the Lockwood committee bills, drawn by Samuel Untermyer, who had exposed the iniquities of both contractors and unions. It provided that unions should not restrict membership except on the basis of citizenship or trade qualification and should not unreasonably limit the number of apprentices.

That bill was unanimously beaten in the Senate. When it comes to regulating trade organizations there is a higher power than the legislature of this state. It is the trade organizations themselves. They crack the whip and the politicians jump.

One thing is certain. There is no likelihood of houses being built for occupancy by workingmen for some time to come.

## TAX EXEMPTION OF NEW DWELLINGS

There has been much discussion in recent years of the proposal to exempt from local taxation for a period of years new dwellings erected under certain conditions, as a means of stimulating a stagnant construction industry and of meeting the housing shortage.

There has also been doubt in the minds of some people as to the effectiveness of such a policy and as to its legal validity.

In September 1920 such a tax exemption act\* was passed at a special session of the New York legislature called by Governor Smith to deal with the problem of the housing shortage. In the Governor's message to the legislature he said:

The emergency is such at the present time that it might be well to consider the enactment of a law exempting from taxation for a period of years with proper restrictions, buildings used for dwelling purposes whose construction is undertaken within such a period as will assure an immediate increase in house accommodations. I believe this will aid in putting new construction on a fair competitive basis with buildings erected before the war and will assist in creating a market for new buildings.

Pursuant to the authority conferred by this act the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Estimate of the City of New York adopted an ordinance in February, 1921, which granted exemption from local taxes up to January 1, 1932 to new dwellings commenced before April 1, 1922, to the extent of \$5,000 for a single-family house, \$10,000 for a two-family house, and for every multi-family house an amount of the value of the building equivalent to \$5,000 for each separate family-apartment and not exceeding \$1,000 for each living room. The legislature of 1921 amended the law by extending until April 1, 1923 the time within which a building might be commenced. A similar amendment was made in the ordinance by the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Estimate of

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\* See our issue of December, 1921.



the City of New York. In April of this year the law was again amended by extending until April 1, 1924, the time within which a building must be commenced to secure the benefits of the law.

#### ACT HELD UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The question of the validity of such an act as this was considered carefully before its passage and it was deemed by good authority to be sound constitutionally. An attack upon the constitutionality of the act was expected, but was slow in coming. An action was not commenced until the spring of 1922 when the Hermitage Company brought a taxpayer's action seeking to have Chapter 949 of the Laws of 1920 (Section 4-b of the Tax Law) held unconstitutional. The case was argued in October, 1922, and was not decided until March 19, 1923, by Mr. Justice Tierney of the Supreme Court who held that Section 4-b of the Tax Law violates the provision of the Constitution (Art. 3, Sec. 1) against passing a private or local bill granting to any person, firm, or corporation exemption from taxation on real or personal property. In Justice Tierney's Opinion he said:

It is not disputed that the legislature might enact a general law exempting buildings of the character in question from taxation. The act under consideration does not do this. It exempts only those in a particular locality (*N. Y. Law Journal, March 20, 1923*).

Upon this decision of Justice Tierney there was something of a panic among builders. There was fear that Justice Tierney's decision might be upheld and for a very few days there was some lessening in the filing of plans for new dwellings. The time for such filing to secure exemption expired March 31, and before that day arrived plans were filed in greater numbers than ever before.

#### ACT'S CONSTITUTIONALITY SUSTAINED BY THE HIGHER COURT

A favorable decision of the higher court was evidently expected and that favorable, unanimous, decision was rendered April 6. The appeal from the decision of the Supreme Court, Special Term, lies to the Appellate Division, an intermediate appellate

court from which in certain cases appeals may be taken to the Court of Appeals, the highest court of the State. Such an appeal was at once taken in this case, and on May 11th that court unanimously sustained the decision of the Appellate Division.

The unconstitutionality of the act had been alleged in three particulars :

1. That though the act in form was general it really was local and that a local bill granting an exemption is forbidden.

2. That though the legislature might have power to exempt such buildings it could not delegate that power to local legislative bodies.

3. That the statute is in conflict with the provisions of Sec. 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the denial to any person of the equal protection of the law.

The opinion of the Appellate Division was written by Justice Victor J. Dowling.

As to the first point he says :

It is difficult, after the most careful reading of this legislation, to understand how it is possible to characterize the bill enacted into law as a private or local bill. Such a determination involves a complete disregard of the meaning of the phrase 'a private or local bill' as interpreted in literally hundreds of decisions rendered by our highest courts.

As to the second point Judge Dowling said, in part :

It will be remembered that the statute does not relieve from state taxation, but only from taxation for local purposes, and that it is not relieved from assessments for local improvements. Having declared a state-wide purpose to relieve new buildings to be erected under its provisions from local taxation, the legislature left to the localities themselves the determination whether local housing conditions were such as to require a stimulus for new buildings to relieve the congestion. This, it seems to me, was a valid delegation of authority, in view of the power of localities over their local taxation.

As to the third point Judge Dowling said, in part:

Nor does the statute violate the "Equality Clause" of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution. As was said by Mr. Justice Bradley in *Bell's Gap R. R. v. Pennsylvania* (134 U. S., 232, at page 237): "The provisions in the Fourteenth Amendment, that no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, was not intended to prevent a state from adjusting its system of taxation in all proper and reasonable ways" (*N. Y. Law Journal*, April 9, 1923).

#### HAS THE LAW STIMULATED BUILDING?

In our issue of December, 1921, a table was published showing the estimated cost of new dwellings and the number of new dwellings for which plans were filed from February 26 to December 10, 1921, and for a corresponding period of 1920. That table showed a very satisfactory increase in provision for housing. In 1920 the plans filed for dwellings and tenements provided for 10,695 families and in 1921, for the same period, for 53,787 families. For two years and one month, from February 26, 1921 to March 31, 1923, plans have been filed for 74,201 one- and two-family dwellings to house 110,549 families, and 4,869 plans have been filed for multi-family buildings to house 99,838 families. Thus in two years and one month plans have been filed to house 210,387 families as compared with housing for 11,607 families in the entire year of 1920.

The average estimated cost per family for one- and two-family houses is \$4,490 and for tenement houses \$4,421. For the full year of 1920 before tax exemption, the total estimated cost of one- and two-family dwellings and tenement houses was \$75,837,124. The total estimated cost of the same classes of dwellings for the two years and one month, from February 26, 1921 to March 31, 1923, was \$936,388,020.

It was predicted that many dwellings would be erected as a result of exemption which would not have been erected if there were no exemption, and that it was erroneous to speak of taxes which would be lost by reason of exemption because there would have been no buildings to tax, or at least not many buildings to tax. It was further predicted that there would be an increase in the value of vacant land ripe for development. In the *Record and Guide* of April 7, 1923, Mr. Patrick J. Reville, Superin-

tendent of the Bureau of Buildings in the Bronx, is quoted as follows:

#### IN THE BRONX

A dozen large estates in the Bronx have been cut up into building lots since the Tax Exemption Law was adopted. Since the law went into effect on February 28, 1921, more plans for one- and two-story dwellings have been filed in the Bronx than were filed the entire 14 years prior to the law.

The Tax Exemption Law has created a market for vacant land. Ask the real estate auctioneers. They will tell you the story of the sale of vacant lots in the last two years. Prior to the Tax Exemption Law many people who had bought lots failed to build homes because of the high cost of labor and materials. If no inducement such as tax exemption had been held out to them they would not have filed plans for building homes.

Many purchasers of vacant lots five years ago have defaulted on their taxes, have failed to pay assessments for street openings and sewers and have in effect just walked away from their property, permitting the lots to revert to the city. Somebody has to pay the taxes on property thus thrown back on the city. In the last five years the city has advertised for sale 22,000 parcels thrown on its hands for taxes. On many of these lots no taxes have been paid for 10 or 12 years. The Tax Exemption Law brought into existence many millions of dollars' worth of taxable property which will bring returns to the city just as soon as the exemption limit is reached. If nothing had been done to stimulate the erection of these homes they would not be in existence.

#### IN BROOKLYN

In Brooklyn plans for new dwellings for the first three months of 1921, which included one month of tax exemption, were estimated to cost \$9,405,250. For the first three months of 1923 plans were filed to house 19,099 families at a cost of \$84,845,550.

#### IN QUEENS

According to the *Record and Guide* the situation in the



Queens Bureau of Buildings during March was substantially similar to that which prevailed in Brooklyn and the Bronx. According to Superintendent Moore the total of plans filed in the Queens Building Bureau for the first three months of this year was greater than the amount for any entire year prior to 1921.

## IN MANHATTAN

In Manhattan where population is not increasing as rapidly as in the other boroughs plans were filed in the first three months of this year for new dwellings and tenements to cost \$26,807,000 as compared with the new dwellings and tenements for the whole year of 1920 to the amount of \$13,565,000. It is notable that the number of families to be housed in one- and two-family dwellings is exceptionally large as compared with prior years in the City of New York.

The following table shows the extent of building construction since the law has been in operation as compared with one year prior to its enactment, viz., the year 1920.

### ESTIMATED COST OF BUILDINGS

	1920 1 year	Feb. 26, 1921 to March 31, 1923 2 years and 1 month
Dwellings	\$53,834,224	\$495,170,720
Tenements	22,002,900	441,217,300
Dwellings and tenements	75,837,124	936,388,020
Average cost per family		
Dwellings	\$ 4,743	\$ 4,490
Tenements	7,401	4,421

### NUMBER OF BUILDINGS

Dwellings	8,634	74,201
Tenements	121	4,869

### NUMBER OF FAMILIES PROVIDED FOR

Dwellings	11,350	110,549
Tenements	2,973	99,838
Dwellings and tenements	14,323	210,387

The results of the Tax Exemption Law to date have been far beyond the predictions of its most sanguine supporters.

LAWSON PURDY,  
New York City.

## “BETTER HOMES” CAMPAIGN

The movement for “Better Homes” which originated a year ago under the leadership of Mrs. William Brown Meloney of New York, editor of the *Delineator*, seems likely to become a permanent feature of the country’s efforts for betterment of living and social conditions.

“Better Homes Week” in 1922 was so great a success in arousing the interest of the women throughout the country to the possibilities of home improvement in various directions, that the plan is to be repeated again this year in the week of June 4th to 10th under the leadership of a group of persons prominent nationally, headed by such persons as Secretary of Commerce Hoover, Mrs. T. G. Winter, President of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs and other equally well known people.

Last October a “Better Homes Week” demonstration was carried on in 961 towns and cities. In a statement recently issued in the name of Secretary Hoover it is pointed out that “The Better Homes” movement is not a back-to-the-land movement nor an own-your-home movement, but a comprehensive treatment of the whole home problem.

While no funds are being raised, the movement is a concerted drive to exploit to the fullest opportunities for better housing conditions, better grasp of what can be done with a limited income in making a home, and a more conscientious effort on the part of all members of the family toward making the home a place of comfort and inspiration.

Already hundreds of communities are organizing and at work preparing a model house or model apartment to show what can be done with a given income and to bring to a focal point the year’s work in the improvement of home conditions. In speaking recently of the importance of this movement Secretary Hoover said:

Every community needs such a demonstration. A successful campaign can be conducted with comparatively little time, effort and money. The chief essential is a desire to

serve the community. Better homes mean better business and better citizenship.

Detailed information with reference to this campaign can be obtained from Mrs. William Brown Meloney at 223 Spring Street, New York City.

## GETTING FACTS ABOUT THE HOUSING SHORTAGE

A possible valuable by-product of the present housing shortage is to be found in a recent investigation of the housing shortage in the city of Utica, N. Y., made by the Utica Real Estate Board under the leadership of its President, Mr. John D. White.

Similar surveys have been made from time to time in various communities but this particular survey is unique.

For, it has related its inquiry to the financing of house building operations. For the first time in the history of the country, so far as we know, a study has been made of the housing needs of a given community, primarily from the point of view of enabling those investing funds in house building operations to know accurately whether they are likely to encourage overbuilding or whether they are failing to meet the city's real housing needs.

The purpose of this survey as stated was to ascertain:

- (1) The number and nature of all "vacant" houses.
- (2) The continued need for and the extent of present house building in Utica.
- (3) To show the need for continuing the campaign for more mortgage money and encouraging more building in Utica.

In order to gather the necessary information the following work was undertaken:

- (1) A summary statement was obtained showing the amount of mortgage money loaned in the City of Utica for the year 1922, by various local banks and savings institutions.

- (2) The city was divided into 7 districts and each district was carefully canvassed by a team consisting of 2 men who reported every vacant house, whether old or new, whether one-family or two-family and also the number of

vacant apartments and the estimated value of the new houses.

As a result of the investigations thus made the Committee found the following facts:

1. That 45½% of the vacancies are found in the extreme Eastern part of the city in the main inhabited by the Italian residents, due in a large measure to the fact that the buildings have been neglected and have poor rental attraction.

2. That of the 126 homes under construction, 48 are contained in the number being erected for sale only.

3. That of the vacancies in the city 50% are of apartments. The Committee believes that in discussing vacancies, the coal situation must be taken into consideration and that in some instances families have combined for the winter, rather than occupy separate apartments or flats with the chance of meeting a scarcity in available coal.

Prior to this inquiry there had been an impression among the Presidents of the various banks that because of the great building activity in Utica in 1921, there had been overbuilding. The result of the Housing Report therefore was to convince the banks that the housing shortage still existed, although not in an acute form, and that loaning operations should be continued generously. As a result of this survey, the Savings Bank of Utica has indicated that it will continue to loan money for speculative building; however, in order not to encourage excess building the bank will limit its loans to 3 houses for each contract at a time, and as soon as these houses are disposed of loans will be made for 3 more.

As is pointed out in a most interesting and valuable article by Meade C. Dobson, Executive Secretary of the New York State Association of Real Estate Boards, in the March 26th issue of the *National Real Estate Journal*, the methods employed by the real estate men of Utica should serve as an object lesson and an example to be followed by every real estate board and every community throughout the United States.

The important by-product of the housing shortage to which we referred at the opening of this article is contained in the suggestion made by Mr. White under whose leadership this inquiry was made.



This suggestion is, that, as a matter of routine procedure, similar surveys participated in by the bankers, the Real Estate Board, the Chamber of Commerce and the builders and material men of every important community in the United States should be made at stated intervals, either annually, semi-annually or every 3 months, so that in future instead of proceeding upon guess-work estimate, the building operations of each community could be based upon accurate facts carefully ascertained as to the needs of that community.

This most interesting suggestion of Mr. White's has been transmitted to Secretary Hoover for his consideration and it is hoped that he will be moved to make a similar suggestion to the financial and business interests of the country.

## IS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BUILD FOR THE WORKINGMAN?

Much light has recently been thrown upon the present housing situation by the remarks made upon the occasion of the annual meeting of the Cincinnati Model Homes Company by its President, Mr. Max Senior.

This Company, which was formed by the late Jacob G. Schmidlapp, has made as its distinctive contribution to the cause of housing the fact that the admirable buildings it constructed were constructed at low cost so as to be within the renting power of working people in Cincinnati.

In reviewing the work of the company for the year Mr. Senior, in discussing the question of an extension of the company's holdings and the construction of new buildings, had the following to say:

We have no vacancies and a very long waiting list of applicants for our rooms. This brings us to a consideration of what we can do, and I regret that with the utmost good will I cannot see our way clear to build houses to rent to unskilled or moderately skilled workmen. I have consulted frequently with our Vice-President during the year and with his consent have even had sketches made for a three-story building, to contain 6 four-room flats. Although we adopted every contrivance we could think of to reduce the cost we find that such buildings cannot be erected now, to rent at less than \$35 per month—possibly higher. These figures

seem to me quite prohibitive. A workman cannot pay a monthly rent higher than his weekly wage, and certainly a wage of \$35 every week in the year is unusual. The situation is very distressing, for there is no doubt that many families have been compelled to put up with inferior quarters, owing to high rents; but I see no way out.

## MUNICIPAL HOUSING PROPOSED FOR PENNSYLVANIA

Students of housing have been continually surprised, during the great shortage which has prevailed since the war and the ensuing conditions of increased rentals, that comparatively few proposals have been made for the state or municipality to undertake the building of houses.

One could literally count upon the fingers of one hand the proposals of this character that have found their way into our state legislatures. When, therefore, such a proposal is made in one of our legislative bodies it becomes a matter of comment. Recently a bill of this nature has been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature by Mr. Stavitski.

The bill in question appropriates \$1,000,000 to be used as subsidies for the building of houses to be paid to the cities and boroughs of the state on the basis of an equal appropriation being made by such cities and boroughs. The houses to be constructed are to be of types to be approved by the Municipal Housing Commission created by the act, made up of the Secretary of Internal Affairs, the State Treasurer and the Commissioner of Labor and Industry; such houses to be resold on long time payments under such conditions and upon such terms as may be agreed upon by the Commission and the local authorities.

The Act provides in considerable detail for the methods of functioning and the relation between the state and the localities. A Bureau of Municipal Housing is established by the bill in the Department of Internal Affairs. This Bureau is required by the Act to collect information on housing, to prepare standard types of houses together with standard plumbing, heating, ventilating and lighting systems and to devise and adopt standard parts or articles entering into the construction of houses and may make contracts with manufacturers for the manufacture of such standard parts. The bill contains other interesting features.

In view of the fact that the new administration in Pennsylvania under Governor Pinchot is committed to a policy of economy, there seems little likelihood of this measure which calls for a large appropriation from state funds, being favorably considered.

## WOMEN'S DORMITORIES THREATENED

It looked a few weeks ago as if the attractive women's dormitories on the Union Station Plaza at Washington, erected by the Government during the war to house women employees of the Federal Government, were likely suddenly to have their career cut short.

In February, notice was served on the Government by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, which owns the land upon which the 18 dormitories are situated, to vacate the property by April first. This action was taken because of the failure of the U. S. Housing Corporation to pay to the railroad what they considered an adequate rental for the use of the land, there being legal obstacles which prevented the payment of rent by the Government, and Congress apparently having been unwilling to acquire the property through condemnation proceedings.

As a result of these demands by the owners of the land, it became necessary for those responsible for the administration of the Government dormitories to require the women occupying them to pay an increased rental of \$4.50 a month. Failing this it was announced by the officials of the U. S. Housing Corporation that the hotels would be closed.

After stirring up considerable discussion and some agitation among the women guests of the hotels, resulting in 60 guests leaving the hotels as a protest against the increased charges, the matter has been finally adjusted.

It is an interesting indication of some of the difficulties involved in the invasion of the field of private business by Government. For, not only did the beneficiaries of this government scheme keenly resent the effort to place these hotels upon an economic basis but some of them went so far as to suggest the calling of a boycott against the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company on the part of the occupants of these dormitories through refusal to travel on this road.

That the owners of valuable real estate were entitled to a fair return upon the money invested in such real estate seems to have had little consideration by the Government clerks who were evi-

dently quite content to accept comfortable and even luxurious living accommodations at the expense of the taxpayer.

At the present time "all is quiet along the Potomac" and the embattled clerks have apparently settled down to a tranquil and normal existence at increased rentals.

## A CREDITABLE YEAR'S WORK

### PHILADELPHIA

During the past year the Philadelphia Housing Association, serving as a clearing house for 47 welfare agencies, visited 16,445 properties and largely by the aid of the city abated about 7,000 unsafe and insanitary conditions. Among the complaints handled, 4,665 were against defective plumbing and bad drainage conditions, 1,233 were inadequate sanitary equipment, and over 700 defective structural conditions, and the remainder were on occupancy and miscellaneous complaints, including room overcrowding, cellar living, offensive animals and trades in dwellings.

Among the valuable pieces of housing betterment carried on during the year by the City Department of Health and aided by the Housing Association has been the reduction of the number of privy vaults on sewered streets to approximately 350. There are outstanding about 12,000 vaults on streets that are without public sewers. In 1910 there were over 60,000 such vaults in Philadelphia.

### EFFICIENCY STUDIES MADE

In its capacity as a fact-finding agency, the Association during the year has analyzed the efficiency of the City as revealed in the handling of violations filed by the Association, and has also analyzed the housing shortage and dwelling construction needs.

The Association analyzed 1,133 complaints that had been outstanding for more than two months; 52.5% of these were corrected, while 47.5% were at the time still existent. Three primary causes for such a large percentage of uncorrected complaints were ascertained. First, the Departments responsible for procuring abatement were all undermanned. They had too few inspectors and many of these, because of the inadequate clerical force were detailed to office duty and not engaged in field work for which they were employed. Second, the funds available for the abatement of housing violations were wholly inadequate to



meet the need. This situation seems to be chronic notwithstanding that approximately 95% of the funds thus expended are returned to the city treasurer and do not represent a real outlay of capital, since the interest on such money is a part of the costs liened against the property.

And third, the courts were found to be unsympathetic in that the magistrates were contenting themselves with the issuance of summons and not of warrants when violators were ordered to court. Such summons were ignored repeatedly necessitating a constant postponement and of course a continuance of the violations unabated. It was further found that many of those who did appear in court were fined costs amounting to only \$1.65 in some instances and in other instances to \$4. This was contrary to the law which placed a minimum fine of \$5 and costs. Such wholly inadequate fines tended toward the continuance of nuisances. Rarely was a case found where on second appearance the minimum fine provided by the law of \$25 was levied.

### ADEQUACY OF THE WATER SUPPLY

In a study of the inadequacy of the water supply of small dwellings, the Association investigated 725 houses most of which were on courts and alleys and found that 2,639 persons occupied these buildings which had a total supply of 268 hydrants and pumps. In one court there were 3 yard hydrants for 12 properties, no water supply in the dwellings. In another court there was one hydrant for 6 houses. One area was found where there were over 500 people without a city water supply. Wells driven into the marsh lands served some householders; others, when they get the opportunity, draw water in hogsheads and buckets from a city hydrant about one-half mile away. Yard hydrants permit an extravagant waste of city water. The Association found that in every cold snap hundreds of these yard hydrants are left running full force to prevent the pipes from freezing. During December, on 55 properties, the leakage and flow to prevent freezing approximated a wastage of over 36,000,000 gallons of water.

### EFFICIENCY IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

At the close of the year the Association had under way another analysis of city departmental efficiency in handling complaints. A time record was kept of the period allowed to elapse between

the filing of a complaint with the city and the appearance of the city inspector on the property where the violation exists. This serves a two-fold purpose; it determines the length in time thus elapsing and also whether inspectors actually investigate all violations reported.

Such analysis does not imply any criticism of departmental efficiency but it illustrates the methods pursued by the Association to improve the standard of work performed by public employees in the field of housing. As a result of the preliminary findings of this study already two days loss of time per complaint has been checked and corrected.

Another important survey conducted was an analysis of the functioning of the state Bureau of Housing. This survey was made at the request of the Citizens' Finance Committee and for Governor Pinchot. Reference is made elsewhere in this issue to further surveys into the housing shortage in Philadelphia and the dwelling construction programme of the city for 1922, as well as to the surveys into rent increases and rent laws and their efficiency throughout the United States. The Association sees definite evidence of the fact that the longer the housing shortage persists, the more tolerant the public gets with it; for, they accept its reality and feel hopeless as to its solution. The indifference bred by this is a baneful factor in Philadelphia's life; for, where there are so many thousands of families comfortably housed and economically prosperous the social consequences of congested occupancy and rent profiteering do not seem to excite any concerted action for the bettering of living conditions of the poor.

The large number of new dwellings constructed during the year, spectacular in the impression which they present, has created a further feeling of contentment among those who should be alert to the hazards of unwholesome occupancy. They think that the housing shortage will soon be overcome. There is a dangerous consequence to this attitude of mind; for, it causes a relaxation of interest which has its further reaction upon bankers who loan building money, upon City Councils who should appropriate funds for public improvements well in advance of the builders who build, and upon the builders who are restricted in building if they cannot get adequate funds, or if the city does not share in the work of preparing undeveloped areas for the building of houses.

Akin to these surveys were the further analyses of the labor shortage in the building trades and of building material prices

which seemed to show very little promise for a reduction in the cost of construction for some time. The cycle of costs is swinging upward and though there may be slight deviations above or below this upward curve, the chances are that the upward swing will not reach its peak for at least another five years. The effect of this is felt by the low-rent paying group who are obliged to use the cast-off houses of the classes more economically prosperous, but the small-wage earning class constitutes the vast bulk of the population of the city. Poor houses and overcrowded occupancy for them always means an increase in the number and seriousness of the civic and welfare problems of the city.

In the promotion of good housing the Association has concentrated its attention primarily on three plans.

### A LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

In this it has cooperated with the city Department of Public Welfare in promoting legislation to check unreasonable rents, and with the city Department of Health in drafting amendments to the Philadelphia housing code as well as with the State Department of Health and the State Chamber of Commerce in preparing a state housing law. The Association is interested in and working for the constitutional amendments sponsored by the city Department of Public Works giving the city the right of excess condemnation and of the assessment of benefits for public improvements. A large portion of the time of the Association has been given to the promotion of the proposed Zoning ordinance for Philadelphia.

### SMALL HOUSE PLANS

A programme for the erection of small-cost houses was outlined. Plans and specifications were prepared in the office for a four-room house with sanitary equipment, but without many of the features found in commercially built houses. Estimates were received on these plans showing that the building can be constructed for \$2,800 per house.

### EDUCATIONAL WORK

The biggest task of the Association, though, has been the education of the people to housing conditions, housing needs and a practical programme. To this end it gathers facts so that the

people may be correctly informed, believing that a correctly informed public will in the end right the wrongs that exist, not only in its governmental relations but in its economic relations. During the year lectures were given to 85 business mens' associations and women's groups. Most of these lectures were illustrated, showing existing conditions and depicting their causes and presenting a programme for their correction. Numerous pamphlets issued in a series under the caption "Know Your City" have also presented to the public the facts gathered; while releases of news stories to the press have reached the wider public, and judging by the letters received in response to such news matter, it maybe assumed that the information is being received and digested. There has been no year in the history of the organization when the press has so interested itself in the problems in which the Association is interested, and has expressed itself editorially with such force as during this past year.

A comprehensive exhibit has been prepared and presented at such public meetings as the Real Estate Show in the Armory and at the Home Beautiful Exhibition in the Commercial Museum. At the request of the National Federation of Construction Industries, an exhibit showing the construction programme and the need, was shown in Chicago at the national meeting of that organization. The Public Schools have asked that these exhibits be combined and circulated among the schools for object lessons in the civics classes. They are therefore, going the rounds of the schools, being erected and kept in each a week at a time. A staff member of the Association gives three periods each week to group meetings with the students in explanation of the exhibit.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

## NEW YORK HOLDS THE FORT

Eight bills amending the tenement house law and two bills amending the Charter of the City of New York in such a manner as to affect the Tenement House Department were introduced at the legislative session of 1923. Of these, all but three failed of passage.

The bills which passed were the Antin-Jesse Bill amending the law in relation to gore lots and heights of buildings where grades are abnormally steep.



Another Antin-Jesse Bill amended the tenement house law in a number of particulars of which the principal were; to permit fire-escapes in courts running through from street to street; permitting ceilings to be 8 feet in height, instead of 9 as at present, when the minimum floor area is increased from 70 square feet to 80 square feet; permitting "dining bays" to be constructed of smaller area than legal rooms, removing area limitations on kitchens and certain other minor changes.

A third Antin-Jesse Bill was intended to permit water-closet compartments installed in private houses hereafter converted into tenement houses, to be ventilated by a duct without any window opening to the outer air. The number of such dark toilets was to be limited to one in a building.

The first and second of these bills have been signed by the Governor and are now laws; the third bill permitting dark toilets is unlikely to be signed not merely because it is bad in itself, but because a careful reading of the bill shows that it does not express the purpose of its introducers.

The two bills amending the charter were known as the Leininger Bill and the Dunnigan Bill. The former measure proposed to give the Tenement House Commissioner complete discretionary power to vary or modify the tenement house law. It was reported in the Assembly but overwhelmingly defeated when it came to a vote. The Dunningan Bill proposed to confer on the Board of Appeals power to overrule the Tenement House Department and vary or modify any provision of the law. Because of defects in drafting, this measure, which was reported in the Senate without a hearing made no progress.

If the bill permitting dark toilets becomes a law it seems probable that legal action will follow to determine the proper meaning to be attached to the language of the statute.

JOHN J. MURPHY,  
New York City.

## PROGRESS IN CINCINNATI

Some progress can be reported from Cincinnati in housing despite the many discouraging features of the situation which has prevailed during the past year.

The shortage of nearly 4000 houses has created a scarcity which has kept rents increasing all during the past year and has caused

perplexing problems for the people of the tenements and for the middleclass as well. In 1917 an actual survey showed that 10% of our tenement flats were vacant. To-day tenement rooms are so scarce that there are not nearly enough to supply the demand. There is an increasing amount of overcrowding. The Better Housing League has been forced to permit its Visiting Housekeepers to devote a large portion of their time to finding homes for needy families. In 1917 tenement rentals averaged between \$3. and \$4. a room per month. Today they average between \$5. and \$6. We believe this exceeds the percentage of increase in wages during the same period.

The man of moderate means who paid very little attention to housing before the War has waked up to find himself facing a housing problem of his own. There are not enough houses for people of his class. He is finding himself forced to pay far higher rentals than before the War and even so he has great difficulty in finding a satisfactory flat or house.

### A RECORD BUILDING YEAR

Last year Cincinnati built 1800 homes—a record for home construction in this city—yet it was only about 500 houses more than are constructed in a normal year. Investigation of the facts discloses that during the same period tenement houses, housing some 400 families, were torn down to make place for business and industrial buildings. The actual gain in the supply of houses was therefore very slight.

There can be no question that it will take at the very minimum three or four years with capacity building for the supply to catch up with the demand.

In improving existing tenement conditions gratifying progress has been made. Increasing tenement rentals, while a great hardship to the poor, have not been an unmitigated evil. They have made tenement houses a better investment—so much so that for the first time in years there is a wave of speculation under way in tenement properties. This has made it possible to prevail upon owners to make repairs much more readily than when rents were lower. The Better Housing League has endeavored to keep in touch with owners of tenement properties and in cases where transfers were made at great increase of price to induce owners to improve their properties.

## IMPROVING THE OLD HOUSES

The three agencies working to improve tenement house conditions are the Housing Bureau of the Building Department, the Sanitary Division of the Health Department and the Better Housing League. The combined efforts of these three agencies working together in a fine spirit of cooperation has made Cincinnati a far better housed city than it was 10 years ago. Most of our worst pest-spots have been removed. Many substantial improvements have been made and at least one of the outstanding evils has been almost entirely eliminated. Five years ago there were nearly 5000 of the old antiquated toilets in the city. To-day, thanks to the joint efforts of the Sanitary Division of the Health Department and the Housing Bureau, there are less than 800 in existence and orders have been issued for the abolition of all of these.

The Housing Bureau during 1922 completed improvements in tenement houses which involved the expenditure of \$389,000, including installation of 1500 modern flush toilets and 1200 sinks; provision of outside light and air for 40 rooms; erection of 40 fire-escapes; and 1200 repairs and alterations of various kinds. This, in spite of the fact that the serious financial situation of the city has compelled reduction in the force of inspectors in the Housing Bureau from five to three. The Better Housing League supported the efforts of the Building Commissioner to retain this number of inspectors and had it not been for the splendid cooperation between the Building Commissioner and the Better Housing League, the intelligent support of the Building Commissioner and his Chief Housing Inspector, there is little doubt that the entire force might have been eliminated.

The outstanding activity of the Sanitary Division was the elimination of 1090 "catchbasin" toilets and of 62 privy vaults. The plumbing improvements completed under orders of the Sanitary Division involved the expenditure of \$700,000.

The Better Housing League has continued to work for improvement of housing conditions through its 6 Visiting Housekeepers and is able to report the following results:

## VISITING HOUSEKEEPERS' WORK

The Visiting Housekeepers made 8939 visits to families and succeeded in making some improvements in housekeeping conditions in 589 families. They inspected 907 houses; made 3227 reinspections to improve housing conditions; interviewed 1371 owners; had 5538 bad housing conditions remedied; had parts of houses cleaned and painted in 4459 cases; rooms and halls papered in 788 cases. They visited and aided 107 immigrant families that came into the city during the year.

In order to make our message more concrete the League has established in the West End colored district, where our worst housing exists, a Housekeeping Center. It consists of three typical tenement rooms fitted up in the simplest possible way, neat, orderly and attractive, yet so inexpensive as to be within the means of the ordinary tenement family. Here in this little three-room flat we try to instruct mothers and girls by actual example how they can make cozy rooms in a typical tenement. During 1922 this instruction reached 823 mothers and girls. We conducted nine classes with a total attendance of 175.

Our Visiting Housekeepers found homes for 260 families during 1922.

The League has constantly kept in mind the fact that future developments in the housing field are the most vital part of the entire problem. Two things have happened during the past year that constitute milestones in housing betterment in this city.

The first was the announcement of Mrs. Mary M. Emery's great project for the model town, Mariemont. The plan for the development of a community of nearly 1000 low-cost homes, with parks, playgrounds, library, school, churches, community house, etc. all to be carried out along the most modern city planning lines means a great step forward. It will set a standard which we believe will have a wholesome influence on all of our home building for the future.

## PROGRESS ON THE CITY PLAN

The second was the letting of the contract by the City Planning Commission for the making of a city plan for Cin-



cinnati. The Technical Advisory Corporation of New York City is now at work on the plan which it is expected will be completed in about two years. One of the first things to be done will be the working out of a Zoning system. This alone will be a great factor in guiding future home construction along right lines—and together with the many other features of a city plan it means one of the greatest steps ever undertaken in this city to promote good housing. The League has participated actively in this movement and will continue its activity until Cincinnati gets its plan.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Cincinnati.

## NEW HOMES FOR OLD

The law of compensation is working in a novel manner in Philadelphia. While the absence of a Zoning law is robbing many of Philadelphia's streets of their residential character and is bringing about slum conditions, there are some moves afoot to beautify several of Philadelphia's small streets by transforming their ugly dilapidated houses into attractive little homes.

For 20 years, 50 small three-story houses situated within a stone's throw of the fashionable Rittenhouse Square have been deteriorating. They are a similar distance from a negro section of poor homes. The street is narrow, pavement poor and yards cluttered with old buildings and lean-to sheds. It recently occurred to some of the owners that these houses could be converted into attractive homes. An architect was commissioned to do the work. He adopted the Italian colony unit plan of house-building, pooling the back yard space to make possible an Italian garden. One of the most attractive of these homes is now occupied by Senator Pepper. This new Panama Street "in all its glory" will be in utter contrast to the street of a year ago.

Just as interesting is the rejuvenation of what is now known as "Sansom Gardens". The same architect of the Panama Street project has transformed 12 three-story, dingy dwellings of this street into desirable homes. The location of these properties is similar to the Panama Street houses. They are near the homes of the wealthy, and also quite close to the

area inhabited by the poor. The plan of improvement called for the making of a new street, which has resulted in these houses being located on a block within a block, yet with good street approaches.

The development of "Lantern Lane" is no less novel. Sixteen squalid four-room houses which formerly rented for \$12 and \$14 a month, have been converted into houses which now rent for \$100 and over per month. They are located in a commercial section of the town where garages abound, and within three blocks of the Broad Street railroad station. The minor street on which they face has been removed from the city plan and enclosed by iron gates at either end, which prevent its being used as a common thoroughfare. The old street bed has been pooled to make a front yard space. Brick paving has replaced the old cobble stones, evergreen trees and flower beds decorate open areas about the windows. The houses have central heat, iron balconies in front, and although quite small, contain all conveniences and sanitary equipment. But the rents, having been raised to \$100. to \$120. a month, are no longer within the reach of the working man.

These three groups of homes were only a short while ago eyesores to Philadelphia, their disrepair and the type of occupant making them a sanitary problem. To-day they are bright and cheering spots in central Philadelphia—small communities of exclusive homes. The renovation-costs were small compared with the rental returns now obtained. Indeed these costs were so reasonable that they may incite further ventures of like kind, and may also stimulate the artistic renovation of similar houses for use of the small wage-earner.

The Whittier Housing Company has recently completed some work along this line, which marks the improvement of 32 two-story, five-room and shed houses in a negro section of the city. When this enterprise was started, more than a year ago, these properties, renting from \$20. to \$22. per month, were in a very dilapidated and insanitary condition. The Whittier Housing Company has renovated them from top to bottom. They now have indoor toilet facilities instead of the outside vault, porcelain bath tubs in separate compartments and porcelain sinks in the kitchen. Their sheds, bay windows and porches were rebuilt, the houses were newly plastered throughout, all wood-work freshly painted and all walls newly papered. The old wooden fences at the rear were torn down

and replaced by new iron fences, the yards re-cemented and all exterior wood-work freshly painted. Improvements on these houses averaged \$1250 per house, and they are now being rented to colored tenants for \$28. per month. These renovations were more costly than the other areas described, while the rents were kept within the economic reach of the better class of negro tenants.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN

Philadelphia

## A STATE HOUSING BUREAU REORGANIZED

One of the few states which has concerned itself with the improvement of housing conditions outside of the large cities, has been the state of Pennsylvania.

For several years past under the effective leadership of the late Samuel Dixon as State Health Commissioner, Pennsylvania, through its State Housing Bureau, of which John Molitor, Architect, has been head ever since its inception, has carried on throughout all parts of the state a thorough-going educational campaign as to the necessity of improved housing conditions.

While, owing to limitations of staff and appropriation, the work of the State Housing Bureau has necessarily not been adequate to deal with all of the problems which confronted it, it has on the whole performed its task in a satisfactory manner.

Recent dispatches from Harrisburg announced the abolition of this Bureau as part of Governor Gifford Pinchot's "Economy Programme". We are glad to learn from Governor Pinchot himself that these reports are inaccurate and that the Housing Bureau is not to be abolished but is to be transferred from the Department of Health to the Engineering Division of the State. In a recent letter to the National Housing Association dealing with this subject, Governor Pinchot has the following to say:

I wish to state that the newspaper report to the effect that this Bureau is to be abolished is incorrect. It has been transferred to the Engineering Division, and that Division will take over the administration and control of housing work in the state.

In accordance with this policy, a capable engineer from the Engineering Division will be appointed Chief of the

Bureau of Housing, under authority of the Act approved July 24th, 1913.

The field inspection of tenement, boarding and lodging houses, and the service of notices as authorized in the afore-said Act, will be carried out by the district engineers, assistant engineers and engineering assistants, in connection with their regular official trips throughout the State, made primarily for the purpose of water works and sewerage investigations and general sanitary engineering. In addition to the aforementioned field service of engineers, etc., the Department of Health plans to place numerous health officers on a full time instead of fee basis, hence their services can be largely utilized without incurring additional and special expense chargeable to housing work.

With the housing work administered by the Engineering Division, there will be available the part time of the Chief Engineer, Assistant Chief Engineer, Chief of the Housing Bureau, eight District Engineers, eight Assistant Engineers and Engineering Assistants, together with necessary clerical and stenographic service and health officer service.

This would appear to make available a larger number of man-hours per year than under the former arrangement when the force of the Housing Bureau consisted of a Chief, two Assistants, two Inspectors and a clerical force—and is a distinct saving of money.

We are of the opinion that under the conditions existing and the lessened appropriation, Doctor Miner's plan for administering the housing work is the best arrangement that can possibly be made and that it will result in an increased service to the State.

## WASHINGTON'S ALLEYS

The Congress which closed its existence on March 4 had so little time to devote to District of Columbia affairs that it refused to give the District its allotted days and finally adjourned without having voted on several bills of very great importance to the capital city. Among these were bills extending the time for closing all alley dwellings. Consequently, the people of Washington, with their "board of aldermen" scattered to the four corners of the country, are left to devise their own methods of providing housing accommodations by June 1 for some 9,000 to 12,000



people, the great majority of whom are able to pay only the lowest rents. Congress will reassemble next December and may then have a mild interest in learning what Washington did with its problems. This is one of the advantages enjoyed by a voteless community governed even in matters of detail by non-residents.

The alley dwellings of Washington have been a source of trouble for many years. They first came into notice soon after the Civil War when colored people from the South poured into Washington and began to make their habitations along the maze of alleys which penetrate the large squares created by L'Enfant's plan of the capital city. In the early days the dwellings of wealthy residents frequently had attached to them at the alley end of the property a building in which the servants were housed. With the influx of southern negroes after the Civil War the number of these alley dwellings greatly increased and the alley houses in many instances ceased to have any direct connection with the street house. In the course of time this alley population increased to some 25,000 or more.

Sanitary conveniences were almost non-existent in the alleys, and with this large population the situation became exceedingly bad. So there developed a determined agitation to rid the alleys of dwellings. Coincident with this was a campaign to improve sanitary conditions. As a result, sewers, water and lights were introduced into the inhabited alleys and conditions thereby noticeably improved. Many of the alley houses were in themselves good types of dwellings—little one and two-story cottages with abundant light and air. But despite all this the secluded location of such dwellings made them very detrimental and the campaign for their elimination continued. In 1892 a law was enacted preventing the erection of any more dwellings. In 1906 a Board for the Condemnation of Insanitary Buildings was created. This Board soon removed the worst alley dwellings and thereby considerably decreased the alley population. Since then, with the gradual demolition of insanitary and wornout houses there has been a continued decrease in the alley population until today it is estimated to number anywhere from 9,000 to 12,000. The figure of 9,582 is the official figure given by a police canvass recently completed. The police found 3,246 inhabited houses in the alleys. That of 12,000 is given by individuals who claim that a night inspection would show a far greater population than an inspection made during official working hours.

In 1914 a committee representative of the Monday Evening Club and several other local organizations presented a Bill to Congress which provided for closing one-tenth of the inhabited alley dwellings of the District each year for a period of 10 years, and for the conversion into minor streets of certain alleys, which are wide enough to make conversion practicable. This Bill was the result of careful study and, with an intermission since 1917, would probably have solved the alley problem without much hardship. Unfortunately, Congress did not give the matter any consideration until the first Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, who had taken a great deal of interest in the alley situation, expressed on her deathbed the hope that the Alley Bill would be passed. As Congress had not studied the Bill, which had long been in its hands, it responded to Mrs. Wilson's desire by cutting out all the constructive features of the Bill and simply providing that all alley dwellings must be closed by July 1, 1918. In this form the Bill passed.

Then the United States entered the war and housing construction practically ceased. Consequently, when July 1, 1918, approached it was recognized as necessary that operation of the law be postponed. Congress therefore postponed its operation until one year after signing the peace with Germany—until Nov. 14, 1922.

Again as the time for closing the alley dwellings approached it became obvious that to put the law into effect would not only work hardship upon the tenants of alley dwellings but would inevitably drive a large proportion of them at least into street houses that were already overcrowded, so producing conditions even worse than those it sought to remedy. The Monday Evening Club therefore asked the Commissioners of the District to ask a further postponement of the law. Its suggestions were that enforcement of the law should be postponed for three years from the signing of peace with Germany, i. e. to November, 1924; that a Commission be appointed to study the problem of rehousing the alley population with instructions to report with constructive recommendations and that meanwhile the Commissioners, through the Health Department, should exert themselves to improve the sanitary conditions in the alleys. The Club felt that the postponement asked gave the shortest possible time in which there was any possibility of securing housing construction for people of small means, that while many studies had been made of the actual conditions in alleys there had been no carefully thought

out and authoritative programme for dealing with the alley population in view of the decreased housing accommodations since the war, and that if the owners of the alley dwellings were assured three years revenue from their property they could legitimately be compelled to make necessary improvements. It is to be remembered that during the past two years the owners of these dwellings had expected to have them vacated on short notice and consequently have in many instances let them get into a bad state of repair.

The District Commissioners approved the suggestion for extension of the law and for the appointment of a committee or commission. They asked Congress for the extension, but Congress, perhaps on the theory that everyone asks for twice as much as he expects to get, limited the extension to June 1, 1923. The Commission when appointed found that it had no powers and no money, for Congress earmarks every dollar it appropriates for the District so there is no fund for emergencies. After discussing the situation it finally presented two reports, majority and minority. These led to nothing.

As June 1, 1923, approached those who were interested in the alley situation again sought to secure an extension. The Commissioners secured the introduction of a bill postponing action to the date originally asked for, Nov. 14, 1924. Another bill was introduced providing for the closing of one-third of the alley dwellings each year for three years beginning this June. Those who felt that it would be impossible to secure decent housing for even 3,000 or 4,000 people this spring, asked that the taking effect of the law as to the closing of the first third should be deferred until June 1, 1924. At a hearing before the District Committee of the House this question was presented but on the objection of one of the members of the Committee who pointed out that no quorum was present, the Committee decided not to report and as a result the original alley closing law goes into effect on June 1, 1923.

The situation is obviously so impossible that it is freely predicted an injunction will be brought to restrain the Commissioners from enforcing the law. Meanwhile attempts are being made to secure the erection of a few houses within the means of alley dwellers. But it is beyond any expectation that the 2,000 to 3,000 dwellings necessary can be produced either this spring or by the time cold weather begins next fall.

JOHN IHLDER  
Washington, D. C.

## TWO FLAWS IN PHILADELPHIA'S DWELLING CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME FOR 1922

Philadelphia's dwelling construction programme for 1922 eclipses all records previously established for Philadelphia, and marks the first year since 1916 in which dwelling construction exceeded the annual increase of population. Permits for 9,621 dwellings were issued, entailing an investment of \$53,881,820. No provision, however, was made in this building programme by operative builder, manufacturer or philanthropically inclined individuals for the housing needs of the average citizen. The selling price of the bulk of these houses is from \$6000 to \$9000 each, and less than 5% of those under permit are planned for sale at \$4000 and under, and but a few score will be sold for \$3600 and less.

This phenomenal dwelling construction programme will afford practically no direct relief for the small-wage earner except in the conversion of old houses to buildings of multiple occupancy under standards which are below the requirements for new construction. Over 300 old buildings thus converted at smaller cost than new construction, will care for approximately 1000 additional families.

Another undesirable outcome of the 1922 construction is that an unusually large percentage is for new buildings for multiple occupancy. These new buildings plus old conversions raises the year's total of such housing facilities to 2,448, and is approximately 20.5% of the total accommodations under permit during the year.

For Philadelphia this is an undesirable trend toward tenement living. Prior to the housing shortage less than 10% of her families were so housed. While a limited number of apartment houses may be needed to supply accommodations for a certain element in the city's population, the 1922 building figures show that construction of this type has been pushed too far in Philadelphia.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia



## PROPOSED HOUSING LAW FOR PENNSYLVANIA

Two years ago the Chamber of Commerce of the State of Pennsylvania caused to be prepared a Housing Code using the Veiller Model Housing Law as a basis for their work but departing materially from that standard in numerous respects. At that time the bill in question did not commend itself to the legislature, as it was considered in some respects too drastic and not to have sufficiently definite relation from a practical point of view to the existing conditions that prevailed throughout the state.

Following up this work, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce has continued in the time intervening since then in seeking to perfect their measure and has had a representative committee at work elaborating a state housing law.

Recently such a law has been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature by Senator Frank A. Smith. The bill in question is made to apply to every city of the second and third class, every borough and incorporated town and every township of the first and second class, except to farm buildings in townships.

It is thus seen that this bill, if enacted into law, will have a wider application than any other state housing law hitherto enacted in the United States. For, most of such laws have as a rule applied only to the larger communities.

While a proper State Housing Code for the State of Pennsylvania is something that is very much to be desired, there is grave doubt as to the wisdom of enacting this particular bill into law in its present form, for it contains so many defects of draftsmanship that it is bound to give rise to great dissatisfaction and much litigation.

## A HEALTH DEPARTMENT SURVEYS ITS HOUSING SITUATION

The city of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, has recently made a thorough-going survey of its artisans' dwellings, through its Medical Officer of Health Dr. James Roberts, who has always shown a keen interest in housing and in all progressive health movements.

Using the regular staff of the city Health Department for this service and fitting the work into their other duties, a complete survey of the housing conditions in Hamilton was made during the years 1921-22.

While the primary purpose of this survey was to obtain facts to acquaint the city authorities and the citizens of Hamilton with the conditions that existed, Dr. Roberts has also keenly had in mind the importance of promptly remedying the evils disclosed as fast as they were discovered. In every case where unsanitary conditions were discovered, serious overcrowding found to exist or where it was found that the services of Health Department nurses could be helpful, immediate attention followed. Notices were promptly served to remedy the unsanitary conditions and reduce the overcrowding and public health nurses made immediate visits to homes where their help was needed.

All of this additional work was carried on by the regular staff of the Department.

Three classes of homes were inspected:

- (1) Dwelling houses occupied by one family; (2) dwelling houses occupied by more than one family; (3) tenements, apartments and rooms occupied over stores.

Information was sought on the following points:

Number and name of street or avenue; name of the head of the family; nationality; occupation; if married; health of the family; if any lodgers; if so, their nationality and occupation; total occupants; monthly rental value; if owned by occupant; construction and general description; number of rooms; dark rooms; description and condition of the sanitary conveniences and fittings; general repair and condition; description of cellar and other information.

The results of this interesting sanitary survey have been set forth quite fully in the annual report of the Hamilton Department of Health, the facts disclosed being presented with reference to 5 typical districts of the city.

The following summary of the conditions existing in Hamilton as disclosed by this survey is not without interest:

No. of homes occupied by 1 family	4,148	
No. of homes occupied by 2 families	326	
No. of dwellings over stores and tenements	192	
	<hr/>	4,666
Defective sanitary fittings	1,504	
Defective eavetroughs, plaster and roofs	1,060	
Defective flooring	80	
Dampness and structural defects	117	
Dirty homes and cellars	504	
Dark rooms	133	
Dry earth closets or privy vaults	843	

Out of 4,666 premises inspected 1840, or 40% were owned by the occupants; these included tenement houses and rooms over stores. Figures as to the amount of rent paid are quite significant. Practically none of the low-rental houses were omitted from the survey. In 925 houses the amount paid for rent was less than \$15 a month, representing 20% of the total inspected. In 2896 or 62% of all inspected, the rental value was \$15 to \$25 a month, while in 663 or 14% it was over \$25 a month.

Of the 4,666 residences inspected, 3005 were reported as being in good sanitary condition; 1237 were reported as being in fair condition and 424 as in bad condition. The number of vacant houses discovered was practically negligible.

We commend to the attention of the health officers of the country this extremely interesting document and urge them to "go and do likewise".

## STREET WIDTHS AND RENTS

City planners have long been cognizant of the vital importance to a community of having streets neither too wide nor too narrow but it has been reserved for a housing expert, Bernard J. Newman, Managing Director of the Philadelphia Housing Association, to point out in striking fashion the close relation existing between street widths and housing and social conditions, including even standards of living and such serious questions as increased rentals.

In connection with a proposal pending some months ago before the Philadelphia Council upon a recommendation of the Committee on Public Works, that hereafter in the city of Philadelphia no street be permitted to be established with less than a minimum width of 60 feet, Mr. Newman points out in a letter to the President of the Council that the effect of such a scheme would be to materially reduce the present area of lots without reducing cost, thus saddling the burden on the lot owner. Mr. Newman points out that it will reduce the present area of lots by 15%. He adds:

"It will likewise increase unnecessarily the costs against each property for street paving with its care and upkeep by 140 square feet, and for a house drain, together with such utilities as water supply and in gas and the trenching neces-

sary by ten additional feet each. For these added burdens the investment owner must get an additional return on his invested capital which will reflect in rent advances of about \$2 per month per house.

"The probability is that forcing down lot depths by increasing street widths in residential blocks will tend to eliminate the front yards and porches without any compensating advantage to the city."

Mr. Newman offers the following pertinent questions in connection with the street width proposal:

"Should all streets be the same width? Should the possible future use of streets have a bearing on their width? Should we burden future residential areas with unnecessarily wide streets which will invite through traffic with attendant noise, confusion and safety hazards?"

"Should we do anything which might discourage the construction of small single family homes? Should we do anything which will encourage the development of tenements with the resulting lowered standards of living and the added costs to municipal administration? Should we force down the maximum depth of residence lots to 46 feet and less, thus unnecessarily taking from the ultimate owner about 15% more of his lot?"

"Should we allow the higher paving and maintenance costs of too wide streets and the increased cost of longer drainage and utility lines thus made necessary to be added burdens on housing? Should not this matter, since it is an engineering problem, rightfully be referred to the Board of Surveyors or to a City Planning Commission, which latter body City Council has authority to create?"

## LAW ENFORCEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

In our last issue we referred to the admirable series of press bulletins issued from time to time by C. Ray Swain, Secretary of the New Jersey Board of Tenement House Supervision. Continuing this work of securing law enforcement through education, a further series of bulletins has been issued during recent months.

One of these is addressed to tenement house owners throughout the state, and points out that a rude awakening is in store for



them if they continue to fail to observe the requirements of the tenement house law for the lighting of halls at night. It is pointed out that more complaints are received from tenants for the failure of landlords to observe this requirement, than for any other part of the tenement house law. After pointing out the reason for a requirement of this kind, the owners are warned of the fact that penalties of \$100 are provided for failure to observe the law, which the Board intends to enforce. As they put it:

To the tenant who interferes with the lights in the halls, the Board issues a solemn warning, namely, "Help the landlord obey the law; for, if you do otherwise, you may receive a summons for your trouble." To the landlord there is but one injunction—"Keep the lights burning as required by law."

During the present month inspectors have made night inspections and have reported a number of violations of the law. These night inspections are to continue indefinitely and if you want to enrich the State to the extent of \$100, keep your halls in darkness. If you want to save the difference between \$100 and a small gas or electric bill, burn the lights in the halls as required by law.

The Board of Tenement House Supervision has decided upon its course. If you have not decided upon yours, owner or tenant, better do it now while there's time.

Having thus warned owners of their responsibilities the Board in a later bulletin points out to tenants the necessity of their observing the law which prohibits the placing of encumbrances and obstructions on fire escape balconies and other means of egress. They say:

Fires at this time of the year are frequent, due to overheated stoves or flues, and it must be clear to all tenants and owners that it is very essential that the egress to fire escape balconies must be kept clear.

The Board of Tenement House Supervision has found an almost utter disregard of this section of the law on the part of owners and tenants. Hundreds of warning notices have been served and the Board has found it necessary to detail several inspectors to the work of securing the removal of encumbrances. During the last year nearly 1000 fire escapes were found encumbered and the encumbrances removed by our inspectors.

After the severe weather has passed, many tenants with a desire for spring flowers and other growing things seek to make the fire escape balconies a mass of bloom and a thing of beauty. Growing plants are certainly things of beauty and interest, and in their proper place nothing is more attractive; but, their proper place is not on a fire escape balcony which was intended only for use as a means of egress in case of fire.

Then too, many fire escape balconies are so encumbered with dis-

carded household furniture that the only thing necessary to stage an old-fashioned auction is the red flag of the auctioneer.

Do not use your fire escape balcony as a store room—you may be thankful for a clear passageway if you are compelled to use the fire escape in a hurry.

Probably many tenants and owners reading this warning will say, "That doesn't mean me". Of course it does not mean you. It means your next door neighbor, your neighbor across the street and several other neighbors on your block.

If you are not one of the guilty ones, congratulations. But are you sure you never put garbage pails, wood boxes, barrels or pails of coal on the fire escape balconies? What? Never? Well, maybe, once or twice.

Now, owners and tenants, this is one requirement of law which costs you nothing. It's a nice comfortable feeling to realize that you are a law-abiding citizen. It pays. Try it.

If you decide to disregard the law, there is trouble ahead. During the coming months our inspectors will make a drive against encumbered fire escapes and you may be caught in the haul. It will then be too late to decide.

Following up these two admonitions the Board has issued a third, addressed primarily to tenants, with regard to the disposal of rubbish and the keeping clean of all parts of the building. In this notice they say:

Two or three months ago the Board issued, through the press, a statement and a warning to tenants relative to their duty toward the landlord in helping to keep the halls, cellars and yards clean and free from encumbrances. Despite the many warnings, scarcely an inspection of a building is made which does not show an utter disregard of some tenants. The law requires the halls, rooms, stairs, yards, courts and cellars in tenement houses to be kept free and clear of all accumulations of dirt, filth and rubbish.

The favorite place for throwing waste, refuse and articles for which there is no further use seems to be in the cellar. These things according to the definition cited, are rubbish and the law prohibits the accumulation of rubbish in tenement houses.

These accumulations of rubbish and these encumbrances are not placed in the cellars and halls by the landlord but by his tenants and the Board of Tenement House Supervision intends to see that the owners are not held entirely responsible for the wilful acts of tenants.

During the last year it was necessary to secure the removal of rubbish and filth from 4,019 halls and stairs. This means that the tenants using 4,019 halls and stairs wilfully and carelessly encumbered and littered these halls and stairs with rubbish. It is not fair to the owner, who already has heavy burdens to carry, to saddle him with the responsibility which belongs to his careless and filthy tenants.

The law says that these things *shall* not be and the Board of Tenement House Supervision intends to make that word the *most mandatory* word in the law.

"Clean-up Week" is approaching. Clean up the cellars, halls and yards and then cease being a hoarder of worthless trash. Get clean and keep clean and then see how much better the spring air feels.

We commend this method of securing enforcement of housing laws to health officers and heads of housing bureaus throughout the country.

## PHILADELPHIA'S RENTS

On December first last, the Philadelphia Housing Association completed a rent study of 1,159 properties. This survey showed the average rental raise over 1921 to be 5.5%, and over 1914 about 56.4%. It also showed that 28% of the houses had experienced rent increases during 1922, notwithstanding they had had several increases prior to 1921.

No section of the city has been free from such increases. In West Philadelphia rents increased over 100%. Other facts were revealed. Speculative investors still buy properties by wholesale, increase rents and re-sell on the higher income basis.

## THE POOR SUFFER MOST

Also the highest percentage of rent increases fall on renters of the cheapest properties—small-wage earners who can least afford to pay. Pitiable cases of gouging were reported. For three successive times a bed-ridden invalid had her rent raised; poor widows supporting families by day's washings, were increased from \$14 to \$35 a month.

In one instance a six-room three-story house renting for \$14 a month was vacated and re-rented as apartments for \$72 a month. The only expense in the conversion was the installation of a sink and running water on the second floor.

The greatest hardship is being wrought upon the class occupying the cheapest living quarters. Over 33% of the houses renting under \$15 show an increase. Of the houses renting from \$15 to \$30, about 28% show an increase; while but 16% of the houses renting for over \$30 had their rents raised. In like manner and in the same order, the houses at lower rentals had a higher percentage of increase than those with higher rentals. Houses renting under \$15 had an average rental increase of 7.3%

over 1921, while those renting from between \$15 to \$30 had an average rental increase of 5.8%; and those renting for \$30 and over showed an average increase of only 4%.

The particular hardship of this situation is that the burden of the past year's increases has hit the groups of small wage-earning capacity whose wages have not been generally increased and in many cases have been reduced. This encourages the further doubling up of families—the forerunner of social and moral evils.

### REPAIRS CAUSE RENT INCREASES

One of the factors which probably has influenced the raising of rents is the repairing of property. The practice of owners' raising rents after repairing property was noted as very prevalent. Over 45% of the properties repaired by owners during 1922 had their rents raised; of the properties repaired by tenants 30.3% had their rents raised; and of the properties where no repairs were made 23.3% suffered an increase in rentals. This is in striking contrast to the situation 9 years ago. In 1913 when the supply of houses exceeded the demand, the Philadelphia Housing Association found on analysing the effect of improvements and repairs where the average cost exceeded six months rent, that there were only 8.18% of the cases where rental increases followed; while in 1.17% of the cases, rents actually decreased.

The house famine has given the house owner an opportunity to pass on the cost of maintenance to his tenant. As might be expected, the percentage of increase is highest for the group in which the repairs are made by owners viz., 8.6%, than where the tenant makes his own repairs; here it is 7.5%; where no repairs were made the increase was but 4.5%. Among properties renting from \$20 to \$30 a month, was noted the largest number of instances where the owner had raised rents after having repaired the property; here the average percentage of increase is 10%.

Of the 1159 properties surveyed all of which were rental properties in 1921, now 5.4% are occupant-owned. Among the whites this percentage is 6.3%, and among the colored about 3%. If this ratio persists throughout the city, it would indicate that occupancy-ownership has increased since the 1920 census figure of 39.5% to about 45% of the houses in the city. This presents



an outlook that bodes well for Philadelphia. The rental situation on the other hand gives cause for alarm.

### WHY BOTHER ABOUT RENT PROFITEERING?

There is a rising tide of indignation among tenants who are being gouged. It is not shown in vociferous shouting but in sullen resentment. They have limited incomes. Soaring rents mean that other living costs must be cut. Some move into rooms causing congested occupancy.

One mother and four children were found sleeping in a room of less than 100 square feet. A man and wife and four children were found in a room of 96 square feet. Other families reduce living costs by cutting down on clothing and food, leaving undernourished and poorly protected bodies. The result is detrimental to public health and welfare. The hazard of disease is increased and the moral tone of the community is lowered.

Protest letters to the Housing Association are numerous. The City Bureau of Legal Aid says, "The rental situation will become more serious" and they handled 2,289 cases of landlord and tenant in 1922.

### BUILDING WILL NOT CURE THE SITUATION

It is always easy to let events take their course. Some say: "In time, if one waits long enough, wrongs will right themselves." And they apply their sophistry to the rental situation. They say further: "High rents come from the housing shortage. Relieve the shortage and the situation will be relieved. New construction is proceeding apace and through the law of supply and demand, relief may be expected for the renters."

As a matter of fact, construction permits for 1922 for new and converted dwellings were planned to accommodate 11,946 families. It is estimated that 6% of this promised construction was completed in 1922. The population increase for Philadelphia, about 30,000 annually, requires new accommodations at the lowest reasonable estimate for about 6,000 families.

The record-breaking dwelling construction programme for 1922 thus provides for about 1,168 houses and apartments more than the minimum need. Even this number is practically wiped out by the destruction of houses to make room for playgrounds, parkways, the bridge approach and for industrial and commercial construction.

At the present rate of dwelling construction, the greatest in over 15 years, and measured by the annual population increase, Philadelphia may hope to catch up with its housing shortage by 1943 or 1945, if nothing extraordinary occurs meanwhile to interfere.

### LEGISLATION SOUGHT

In view of the conditions disclosed by these studies it is not strange that an effort should be made to seek legislation controlling excessive rentals.

Recently bills have been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature which have as their aim the regulation of excessive rentals, the regulation of unwarranted rental increases, the abolition of oral leases and elimination of a 10 or 15-day notice of dispossession, in all cities of the first class. The bills have been sponsored by the Philadelphia Bureau of Legal Aid, with the approval of the Mayor and the Director of Public Welfare, and are backed by 63 civic and social agencies. Prior to the drafting of the bills a conference of welfare agencies was called by the Bureau of Legal Aid.

Bureau speakers stated that the 5,000 landlord-tenant cases which they handled in the past 2 years involved properties which show a 56% rental increase for this 2-year period. Some instances revealed rental increases as high as 246%. Houses that rented 2 years ago at \$13 a month are bringing \$45 today. There were a number of cases in which the rent exceed 100% more than that charged 3 years ago. One instance was cited where the yearly rental reached 50% of the assessed valuation of the property.

Fifty-seven cases reported since October, 1922, were in the rental range of from \$9 to \$50 per month 2 years ago, but today this rental charge is from \$12 to \$100 per month. The gross rentals of these 57 properties today is approximately \$570.50 more than the gross rentals of two years ago, while the present rentals are over 30% of the total earnings of the families occupying the properties.

The Philadelphia Housing Association in discussing rental conditions as discovered by their recent surveys related instances of gouging similar to those related by the Bureau, and stated the advisability of rent legislation.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

## WINNIPEG SURVEYS ITS VACANT HOUSES

If conditions in Winnipeg are anything like what they are in most of our large American cities it should not be a very difficult task to survey vacant houses. In most of our cities there would not be much to survey.

A recent report published by the Winnipeg Health Inspector early this year shows 450 vacant family accommodations. In 1922 they had only 330 vacant so that at least they are a little bit better off than they were last year. Included in their 450 vacancies, however, are 68 new houses not yet finished. The total number of houses in Winnipeg is 30,520 so that their vacancies are only 1.1% of all dwellings. That certainly does not indicate that Winnipeg is especially well off so far as its supply of houses is concerned.

The report throws some light on the condition of these vacant housing accommodations. 75% of them were unfit for occupancy at the time of the investigation or could be made fit with slight repairs; 14% would need extensive repairs and 10% were so dilapidated as to be beyond repair.

Winnipeg had the typical slump in home building during 1918 and 1919, but began to return to normal in 1921 and in 1922 built 745 houses which for a city of its size is a good showing. It is striking that of the number of homes built last year, 200 of them were built under the auspices of the Winnipeg Housing Commission. It speaks well for what the Housing Commission is doing for housing in Winnipeg as they have been apparently instrumental in encouraging the construction of two-fifths of the houses built in that city during the past year. The report ascribes the increase of home building to the fact that the cost of building decreased 27% during 1921 and 1922. This is a bit unexpected as in some of our American cities, Cincinnati for instance, building costs increased during 1922 more than 15%. The Winnipeg survey did not include apartment houses. The Chief Health Inspector believes that there are probably more apartment house vacancies than usual, but not so many as Winnipeg people seem to believe.

The report speaks most favorably of the Winnipeg Housing Commission and especially emphasizes the Commission's sound financial condition, stating that the Commission showed in profits at the end of 1922 more than \$12,000 and have set

aside \$10,000 of this to form a reserve fund to cover possible losses. The Commission estimates that by purchasing their lumber in large quantities they have been able to effect a saving of \$218 a house.

Apparently the situation in Winnipeg, while somewhat better, is not materially relieved. The poor people particularly suffer from the housing shortage which is forcing the process of converting the single family dwellings into tenements. Because of the lack of sufficient housing accommodations the Health Department feels unable to take drastic action to prevent this conversion. There is a marked increase in overcrowding.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE

Cincinnati

## UPS AND DOWNS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Housing and town planning have been more or less directly in issue in several measures before the Massachusetts legislature during the past winter.

### THE TENEMENT HOUSE ACT FOR TOWNS ATTACKED

One of these attacked the Massachusetts Town Tenement House Act, enacted in 1912 as a permissive act and adopted by nearly all the large towns about Boston—22 in number, and, in population, approximately 225,000. This law provides minimum requirements of light, ventilation, sanitation, area of lot occupied and fire protection; and further limits apartment houses of three or more families to first class (fire-resistive) construction. Many of its provisions are based on the Veiller Model Tenement House Law.

It was made a permissive act for two reasons. First, it would have failed of passage if it had been compulsory throughout the state. Second, with the very strong local self-government sentiment of Massachusetts, it was believed that a community which adopts such a law, thereby crystallizes a public sentiment which will make for its enforcement; whereas, a state law would evoke little interest and would tend to become a dead letter in many parts of the state.

This act and the City Tenement House Act, adopted later in Revere, were far-reaching in effect. Soon the chain of



satellite cities—really a part of Boston—realizing that all wooden “three deckers” and Jerry building would be thrown back into their territory by being excluded from the towns which had adopted this act, enacted more or less stringent housing ordinances, so that in all the chain of cities surrounding Boston—with perhaps one exception—the wooden “three decker” is now prohibited and general provisions for light, ventilation, sanitation and safety have been adopted. Boston, the center, is the only city not to a considerable degree a protected district.

These restrictions irk the cheap builders; and in two towns, Wakefield and Weymouth, an attack was made upon the Housing Act. House Bill No. 559, relative to tenement houses in the Town of Wakefield, provided for the establishment of zones or districts within which the Town Tenement House Act should not be in effect. Some of the public-spirited citizens took the matter up, and conducted such a campaign that the town voted against the measure before it was heard in the legislature, with the result that it was withdrawn from that body.

### WEYMOUTH STEPS BACKWARD

Another Bill, House Bill No. 289, enabling the Town of Weymouth to revoke its acceptance of the Act was introduced under a vote of instruction passed by the Weymouth town meeting. In that meeting there was no discussion and no opposition. It was enacted by the legislature and a vote revoking the Act was taken at a town meeting held subsequent to the passage of the act. The leading citizens and officials of the town generally failed to take any active interest in the question; and the local newspaper was bitterly hostile to the Tenement House Law. Minot P. Gary, Secretary of the Planning Board, circularized a large number of the voters of the town and nearly succeeded in defeating the repeal of the bill. All honor to the one man in the community with sufficient vision, enterprise and courage to make the fight. Even though unsuccessful, it has aroused a post mortem interest in the subject which may result in some future action to correct the absence of law which exists to-day.

In view of the fact that other attacks are likely to be made,

the Massachusetts Civic League, through its Secretary and live Housing Committee, is making a survey to determine the effects of the Town Tenement House Act in towns where it has been adopted, so as to be ready in the future to refute misstatements and propaganda in favor of repeal.

### MUNICIPAL HOUSING NOT FAVORED

The least important measures, as far as any practical results were concerned, were the bills permitting cities and towns to embark in the housing business. These bills are hardy annuals, but the plant annually fails to flower—to say nothing of producing fruit. The New England mind has far to travel before the legislature or the people will favor ownership of housing by nation, state or municipality.

To revert to ancient history, in 1916 the state Constitution was so amended as to make such ownership possible. At that time there had been in Massachusetts no demonstration of modern planning of small dwellings in group construction and the legislature of 1917 authorized an experiment in that line, making a partial appropriation with assurances of the leaders in the legislature that funds to complete the project would be forthcoming in the following year. So far as I am informed, the first state-owned houses in the country were completed in 1917 by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Constructed during war-time at a cost for lot, street improvements and dwellings of between \$2,500 and \$3,100—or between \$400 and \$500 per room above the land—they formed a real contribution to the problem, but the legislature refused additional appropriations to build upon the remainder of the tract.

The Homestead Commission did not favor government-housing and the project was considered but a demonstration proposition. The outcome was satisfactory so far as the building of 12 houses on a tract planned for 50 could be; all of the houses were sold and occupied and are being paid for on a monthly payment of \$19 to \$25, amortizing the total payment for the houses in  $16\frac{1}{3}$  years from date of building. The failure to complete this project, which in no way looked to a programme of government ownership, showed that no legislature knows the mind of its successor—if, indeed, it knows its own. And for that reason any attempt at state or

municipal building—if open to no other objection—involves an uncertainty as to government policy, which would wreck any business concern if applied to its affairs.

Probably on the larger aspect of the question most students of the subject have come to realize that under proper Zoning and building restrictions offering protection to the values involved and with fair taxation, private enterprise will undoubtedly meet the situation better than can government activity. All the objections applying to housing by the Commonwealth apply to building by municipalities. Further, in many of the municipalities of Massachusetts, as well as elsewhere, there is too strong a distrust of the business judgment and disinterestedness of members of the city government, for the voters to consent to the use of the public funds for such purpose.

On the other hand, there is to-day a real need of lower-cost houses in Massachusetts. Question: Is there a real housing famine? The minimum building cost in Massachusetts is from \$1,000 to \$1,200 per room. The wage of the working man averages perhaps \$25 to \$28. It is clear that a gap exists between the needs and accommodations, which can be met only by wholesale construction on fairly low-cost land. When the building trade strike is finally settled (We say “when” because of an inherent optimism in our makeup) we believe that the demand will gradually be met through cooperative enterprise and competition.

The Bill to exempt dwelling houses from taxation, House Bill No. 288, met with defeat as usual.

### RELAXING HEIGHT LIMITATION LAWS FOR SPECIAL INTERESTS

One other matter indirectly of great importance to city planning and congestion was the attack, in House Bill No. 1304, on the present building limit of 125 feet in Boston. The Committee reported out a substitute bill, House Bill No. 1411, carrying certain minor amendments to the Building Act and permitting an increase in height from 125 to 155 feet.

Boston is already suffering from such congestion of subway and tunnels, as renders their use in certain hours indecent and even unsafe, with a foot-traffic so congested in narrow streets as to render progress most difficult, and to decrease

the desirability of stores on the most congested corners. Her narrow streets will render it necessary to exclude autos from the down-town district unless millions of dollars are expended to open new avenues of access, and its sewers are adequate only for a slight increase over the present needs.

It seems unfortunate therefore that the legislature should have passed such an act with no study by a competent body to determine on its advisability. It is more deplorable that the strongest argument used to force the bill through the legislature, was that a certain foreign corporation, engaged in the hotel business and contemplating the building of a hotel here, would not build unless the increase in height was granted. As a matter of fact, the land had been purchased, the architects engaged and plans made under the present building heights; but even had this not been true, it seems undignified, to say the least, that the legislature should be stampeded into action by such an argument; particularly as the City Planning Board is studying the whole problem of Zoning and height of buildings. The Bill went to the Governor and he has asked to have it recommitted for further consideration. If it becomes a law, it will be another case of acting in haste and repenting at leisure.

## TWO FORWARD STEPS

There are two hopeful acts of the Legislature, however; one of these was the creation of a Metropolitan Planning Division within the Metropolitan District Commission. Under this very efficient state department, dealing to-day with Metropolitan water, sewerage and parks, we may look for a correlation of planning in the different municipal units making up the real Boston.

Another important move is the appropriation of a sum for a field worker under the Subdivision of Housing and City and Town Planning in the Department of Public Welfare. Since the consolidation of state departments and the merging of the duties of the Homestead Commission as to investigation of housing, and supervision and encouragement of city and town planning boards, the work has been carried on under the general direction of the Commissioner of Public Welfare, Richard Conant. He has many duties of a different nature, but is interested in the housing and town planning movement and has one assistant, Miss Miriam



I. Ross, who has had direct charge of the work. Her full time has been required at the State House to care for an ever-increasing demand for information and assistance on the part of municipalities.

Few realize what has been accomplished in the Department in the matter of collecting and making available information on housing and city and town planning and giving intelligent interest and help to the Planning Boards. However, the time has come when it is impossible for one person to cover the work at the State House and the field work; and the legislature has provided a field worker known as the Housing and Town Planning Consultant. Mr. Edward T. Hartman, former Secretary of the Massachusetts Civic League, has been engaged, pending civil service examination and permanent appointment, and is already actively at work.

CORNELIUS A. PARKER  
Boston

## NULLIFYING A HOUSING LAW

### HOW A BOARD OF APPEALS WORKS

One of the questions affecting the enforcement of housing and Zoning laws about which fierce discussions have raged has been whether, on the whole, Boards of Appeals were a necessary and essential part in the scheme of enforcement, or whether the evil of such Boards outweighed their advantages.

Those who have contended that Boards of Appeals were both unnecessary and undesirable in the enforcement of housing and Zoning laws, whatever they might be with regard to the enforcement of building laws, have as a rule based their arguments upon the ground that the setting aside of the law in specific cases meant the law's ultimate nullification, pointing out that if the law was wrong in any respect the thing to do was not to grant special privileges in a particular case, but to amend the law and make it right.

There has similarly been some difference of opinion among housing workers as to the relative desirability of state housing laws as contrasted with local housing ordinances, the advocates of extreme home rule generally holding the view that a state law is an invasion of the home rule principle. Those advocating

a state law, however, have generally based their contentions upon the view that a local ordinance is apt to be so subject to local pressure of special interests and so easily changed, that it is bound to be gradually whittled away by process of amendment, whereas a state law will have much greater stability.

A striking example of how these things work out in practice has been afforded by the experience of Portland, Oregon, with its housing ordinance passed in 1919. The original ordinance, modelled after Veiller's Model Law, did not provide for a Board of Appeals. Those interested in the building trades and architectural profession who desired such a board were able later on to secure an amendment to the ordinance by which a Board of Appeals was appointed with power to "interpret" the law.

When the law was originally drafted the Portland Housing Association and others interested in the public welfare had but one thought in mind, viz., to stabilize building, to prevent the depreciation of property and to compel a recognition of the injustice of property owners' relying on "borrowed" light and air for their buildings.

According to competent local observers, this fundamental principle has been utterly disregarded by the Board of Appeals, whose policy has been to favor the individual builder and to make things easy for him, rather than to safeguard the interests of taxpayers, tenants and the citizens as a whole. The granting of special permits permitting buildings to cover the entire lot and permitting buildings to be erected to a height beyond the legal limit, thereby overshadowing adjoining property, has become the rule.

In a few cases where the Board refused such permits, the builders went over the heads of the Board to the City Commissioners and with no difficulty secured the passage of special ordinances permitting that which the housing ordinance forbade.

All manner of evasions have been used. By calling buildings "hotels"—which are permitted by law to exceed apartment houses in height—9-story buildings, to all effects and purposes apartment houses, have been erected and every facility installed for separate family life.

According to a report recently submitted to the Portland Housing Association, an investigation of the official records discloses the fact that special permission to violate the provisions of the Municipal Housing Act by means of special ordinances passed by

the City Council has been granted in 61 separate cases since this Code became effective in March 1919; 42 of these special ordinances having been passed within the past year.

The report points out that the most serious of these cases dealt with the elimination of fire-escapes, stairways in hotels and apartments and the construction of dark halls in such buildings without windows to the outer air. Other violations of the law permitted have been the construction of basement and cellar living rooms as well as living rooms without a proper side yard space for light and air.

Through the activity of the Portland Housing Association headed by Henry M. Esterly as its President, the public has become aroused to the situation and in recent months there has been an effort to check the granting of appeals and the passing of special ordinances.

This granting of all appeals by the Board has established a precedent which is now causing trouble. The public are insistent on a change. It is evident that by creating a Board of Appeals the power to change the law is given into the hands of a small group of individuals, who by their rulings, can make special legislation. Either the law should be repealed and all regulations thrown aside or a law passed for one and all alike, with no appeal.

At a recent meeting of the Portland Housing Association reports of unsanitary conditions were disclosed by the representative of the Public Welfare Bureau who told of ramshackle airless buildings, some of them mildewed from dampness caused by stagnant water in basements; useless plumbing, dark hallways blocked with firewood, and attic rooms where men, women and children live in unsanitary conditions without ventilation and without adequate water supply.

A representative of the Visiting Nurses' Association at this meeting pointed out that the 3 definite problems to be attacked were the shack, the furnished room and the lodging house.

An important element in this situation was the statement made by Judge Kanzler to the effect that many of the cases coming before him in the Domestic Relations Court were largely the result of poor housing.

Those interested in the improvement of the local situation believe that the thing to do is to seek the enactment of a proper and adequate State Housing Code that cannot be appealed or

set aside at the whim of a small group of individuals and that will provide adequate means for its enforcement.

It is to be hoped that the citizens of Portland will at an early date recognize the importance to their community of taking such action, and thus place Portland in the position in which it deserves to stand among the progressive cities of the country.

## FIFTEEN MILLION PEOPLE LIVE IN ZONED CITIES

According to a bulletin recently issued by the U. S. Department of Commerce, more than 15,000,000 people live in Zoned cities, towns and villages. It is estimated that the homes of 27 % of the total urban population of the country are located in Zoned municipalities and thus protected from the intrusion of garages, stores, warehouses or manufacturing plants.

The Department's investigation shows that in 1922 Zoning spread especially rapidly in the smaller places. Fourteen towns with 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants were Zoned during the year, bringing the total Zoned towns in this class to 23. Twelve places with 5,000 inhabitants or less were added to the list in 1922, bringing the total in that class to 17. The percentage of large cities which have already Zoned remains much greater, of course, and of the 50 largest cities in the country, 22 have Zoning ordinances in effect.

In the entire country, 109 cities, towns and villages were Zoned on January 1, 1923, as compared with 55 just one year before.

New York, the largest city in the country, has been Zoned since 1916, and in contrast, the smallest Zoned community had only 131 inhabitants according to the 1920 Census. Eighty-one % of the urban population of New York state lives in Zoned municipalities. California ranks second among the states with 71 % of her urban population Zoned; Minnesota, third, with 58 %; New Jersey, fourth, with 57 %; and Utah, fifth, with 55 %. The entire District of Columbia is Zoned.

In number of places Zoned, New Jersey leads with 31; New York is second with 17; California, third, with 14; Illinois, fourth, with 10; Ohio, fifth, with 9; and Massachusetts and Wisconsin follow with 6 each.

The complete list of Zoned municipalities, as of January 1, 1923, with references to the state acts under which Zoning is permitted, may be obtained from the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce.



## A LOST LEADER

In the untimely death of Charles D. Norton in March, the cause of City Planning and Zoning suffered an irreparable loss.

Mr. Norton had to an unusual degree been responsible for the success of the great Burnham Plan of Chicago and it was his experience in developing that plan and his realization of all that it meant for the future of that city that led him to induce the Russell Sage Foundation to undertake its study of "The Plan of New York and Its Environs" under Mr. Norton's leadership.

When Mr. Norton was about to launch his plan he was considerably concerned as to where he would find another Burnham, to do for New York what Burnham had done for Chicago and to bring to it that large vision which was so characteristic of that big man, and which he expressed so wonderfully in that oft quoted injunction of his which runs as follows:

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high and hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with growing intensity.

As some of us pointed out to Mr. Norton when he was still alive, *he* was the Burnham of the New York Plan. It was because he was so vital a factor in the working out and the development of that plan that his loss means so very much to the cause of City Planning, and especially to the city of New York.

## THE PLAN OF NEW YORK AND ITS ENVIRONS

Since the last report of the Regional Plan of New York and its Environs in *Housing Betterment*\* the outstanding event is the death on March 6th, of Charles D. Norton. Strong in the knowledge of what he and his associates among the young business men of Chicago had accomplished in that city, Norton was the first to propose the present enterprise in New York. He persuaded his associates on the Board of the Sage Foundation to ensure generous financial support, he himself was full of initiative and suggestion, and all with whom he came in contact caught from him the contagion of his enthusiasm and confidence.

It is a real evidence of the essential soundness of the undertaking that despite the loss of his leadership, the work has gone forward steadily, and that the number of those who are taking an understanding and helpful interest is rapidly increasing.

The enterprise is still primarily in the stage of information gathering—relatively less interesting to the public at large—but most significant to those who understand the progress of great social movements. The policy of the staff is first, that the information should be accurate and authoritative, and this has implied the selection of the highest quality of fact gatherers; second, that at every point the strictest economy must be maintained. The appropriation of the Sage Foundation is generous, but it is not unlimited; and when the Plan is formulated in its broad outlines and the Committee in charge goes to the public—as it must—for additional funds, it counts on giving a satisfactory account of its stewardship.

The most tempting form of extravagance is the gathering of information which no matter how interesting *per se* cannot be used by the city or regional planner. The Staff has adopted as its policy the formula of one of its leading members, E. M. Bassett, which may be summarized as follows:

The solution of the planning problem is one that can be indicated on maps, i. e., dynamic maps, now expressing, or later intended to express, official sanction or compulsion.

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\* *November, 1922.*

This cuts out automatically much material which would later prove useless. Another extravagance is unnecessary duplication. While the present undertaking is the only project for a comprehensive plan for New York and its Environs, there are now under way or in prospect within the region 50 or more planning projects, either local or more extended in scope.

There are furthermore many sources of general information—both governmental and private—in the fields which touch city planning. It is always easiest to get your own information in exactly the form you want it, or think you want it, but it is very extravagant when the other fellow's figures can with a little ingenuity serve the purpose equally well—incidentally you are much more likely to have the said other fellow as a friend and co-worker in carrying through your project.

Finally, much can be saved by keeping the form of presentation as simple as possible. Anyone who is interested in seeing how far simplicity may go in the presentation of coupled data is invited to call at the headquarters of the Regional Plan in the Sage Foundation Building, and ask to see Wayne D. Heydecker's housing data for the suburban and rural sections of the Region.

Turning now from the general to the particular, Nelson P. Lewis and his associates in the Physical Survey have increased the number of regional fact-maps to nearly 150, besides preparing in graphic form much special material for the other Surveys. They have also analyzed many of the planning projects of the past—New Yorkers are prone to forget how much good work has been done and how many good jobs have been carried through.

The importance of the air-plane photograph as a factor in Regional Planning is only just beginning to be realized, and the Physical Survey has been doing pioneer experimental work in sketching proposed improvements on airplane "obliques". Some of these are to be exhibited, with the maps of the Survey, by the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in the forthcoming "Jubilee" Municipal Exhibition at the Grand Central Palace.

E. M. Bassett and Frank B. Williams have carried forward their legal theories in Zoning, water front rights, etc., and

have also given helpful counsel to their associates on the staff—which by the way has become a real team, meeting together constantly, and making joint rather than separate recommendations to the Committee.

The Social Survey under the leadership of S. M. Harrison enjoying, as indeed do all the branches of the undertaking, the invaluable cooperation of the personnel of the Sage Foundation, has carried the housing theories into the outlying region, and has made intensive research into the needs and opportunities for small parks and playgrounds in congested districts, a subject in which the acting Chairman of the Committee, F. A. Delano, is deeply interested.

The Economic and Industrial Survey has concentrated upon a question propounded independently by Frederick Law Olmsted and Raymond Unwin, viz.:

What are the industries which are now causing the congestion of Manhattan and large areas of Long Island and New Jersey; which of these, in their own interest and in that of the community must remain where they are, and which might profitably be decentralized?

Professor R. M. Haig, in collaboration with his colleague at Columbia University, R. C. McCrea, is directing a group of workers to find out in terms of numbers, location, land values occupied, and men and women employed, just how the most important metropolitan industries have stood in 1907, 1912, 1917 and 1922.

It is hoped by October 1st next, to have the data for the following: printing, garments, food products, chemicals, metals, tobacco, lumber and woodenware, distribution, wholesale and retail, and financial and allied activities. In this work the investigators are receiving the fullest cooperation from the state authorities, the representatives of organized labor, and from employers. The Regional Plan is thus making many friends whom it would otherwise be most difficult to reach.

While October 1st, 1924, had been set for the practical completion of the preliminary fact-finding studies, Mr. Norton, convinced that no sharp line could be drawn between survey and planning, devoted his last days of activity, already under the shadow of his fatal illness, to the formation of



two groups, one of architects to offer suggestions for the solution of certain outstanding problems in Manhattan and another of professional planners, to list the opportunities and dangers to be faced in the regional study of the territory surrounding Manhattan Island.

Among the cooperating architects, some of whom are already hard at work, and all of whom have promised their interest and support are the following:

Frederick L. Ackerman, Chester H. Aldrich, Jerome R. Allen, Grosvenor Atterbury, Louis Ayres, Henry Bacon, Donn Barber, William A. Boring, Welles Bosworth, Arnold W. Brunner, Charles Butler, Harvey W. Corbett, John W. Cross, William A. Delano, Burt L. Fenner, Ernest Flagg, Cass Gilbert, Bertram G. Goodhue, Howard Greenley, Thomas Hastings, Frederic C. Hiron, Henry F. Hornbostel, John M. Howells, Joseph Hunt, R. H. Hunt, Robert D. Kohn, C. Grant LaFarge, Electus Litchfield, Guy Lowell, H. Van B. Magonigle, Perry McNeill, Henry Rutgers Marshall, Benjamin W. Morris, Charles A. Platt, John Russell Pope, J. Otis Post, James Gamble Rogers, Phillip Sawyer, C. B. J. Snyder, Clarence Stein, I. N. P. Stokes, Egerton Swartwout, A. J. Thomas, Breck Trowbridge, John V. Van Pelt, D. Everett Waid, Louis S. Weeks, Lawrence Grant White.

The following gentlemen have agreed to serve as an Advisory Planning Group: Messrs. Thomas Adams, Harland Bartholomew, E. H. Bennett, George Ford, John Nolen, Frederick Law Olmstead; each to undertake a rapid survey of a sector of the territory lying outside the built-up areas, and the group as a whole to submit by October 1st a joint report on the opportunities and dangers confronting the Regional Planner. Mr. Adams has been selected by his associates to act as chairman of this group.

Meanwhile the Plan headquarters has been carrying forward the making of contacts with public officials, local planning groups, special interests, and the like; and while no publicity campaign has been conducted or indeed, is desired at this preliminary stage, the rapidly increasing public interest in the project has required the preparation of many articles upon the subject, and arrangements for many conferences, lectures and exhibitions throughout the Region. Four publications have been issued in pamphlet form and widely distributed and others are in preparation.

Regional planning is "in the air", and the danger lies not

in lack of interest, but in lack of patience to await the study of fundamentals, and to master the broad principles that must underlie the framework of a satisfactory and enduring Regional Plan. The whole question in our Metropolitan area offers a challenge alike to the planner and to the citizen.

F. P. KEPPEL  
New York

## REGIONAL PLAN FOR CHICAGO

We did not believe that Chicago would be content for long to sit quietly by and see New York City work out its great Regional Plan without feeling an urgent desire to "go and do likewise"—a very proper desire on the part of Chicago in view of the fact that the adoption of the "Chicago Plan" and the important part played in it by the late Charles D. Norton was an important factor in determining Mr. Norton to launch his great scheme for "A Plan of New York and Its Environs".

A few weeks ago a great meeting called by the Chicago City Club was held at the City Club to consider the need of Regional Planning for Chicago. The conference was largely attended by representatives from municipalities and civic and commercial organizations in the metropolitan area.

As a preliminary to this meeting a Report was issued setting forth the need of Regional Planning for the Chicago area and calling attention to the rapid growth both in the city and in its environs, the lack of adequate radiating highways, the need of better transportation facilities, the absence of sufficient sanitary regulations and the need of Zoning for the whole district.

More than 200 delegates were present, which indicated the widespread interest in the movement. The delegates from the smaller cities and villages were somewhat apprehensive lest the movement meant another effort at consolidation with Chicago; but the City Club in the invitation assured the delegates that it was not a disguised attempt at annexation and that any planning project must assume at the beginning that the several cities and villages will insist upon maintaining their independence and autonomy.

The speakers were Dwight H. Perkins, Vice-President of the City Club and representing the Forest Preserve District; Charles H. Wacker, President of the Chicago Plan Commission; Samuel

Insull, president of several large public utility corporations; Mayor H. A. Pearsons of Evanston, representing the cities outside of Chicago; Charles S. Peterson, representing the Board of County Commissioners; Dr. W. A. Evans, representing the health districts and officers outside of Chicago; Jacob L. Crane, Jr., city planning consultant; and Professor Charles E. Merriam, former member of the City Council and Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

The City Club's report shows that there are more than 340 local governmental units within the metropolitan area—14 cities, 83 villages, 191 school districts, 29 townships and 31 park districts—expending taxes for local purposes. Chicago adds to her population every ten years a city the size of Baltimore. This increase occurs in spite of the increasing exodus from the city to the numerous attractive suburbs. Chicago's population during the last decade increased 23.6%. The population of the suburban territory, ten miles in all directions from the city limits, increased 76.3%. In other words, the environs of Chicago are increasing in population three times as rapidly as the city itself. According to the estimates of the Bell Telephone Company, the city will have a population of 4,000,000 by 1940. If the present rate of growth continues, the environs will have by 1950 a population of at least 2,000,000 or a total population for the district of at least 6,000,000.

Very little attention has yet been given to the planning of the portion of this metropolitan area where this rapid growth is taking place. Already the development of industrial areas near residential districts or forest preserve lands is causing alarm. Many of the residential suburbs are being seriously damaged by the encroachment of industries. Highways are becoming badly congested with the development of automobile traffic. Transportation lines are not being extended rapidly enough into the undeveloped areas. On every hand there are evidences of the need of definite planning, the various phases of which were presented by the several speakers. Resolutions were adopted calling for the appointment of a Committee of Twenty-One citizens representing the various sections of the metropolitan district, to consider and recommend "a method by which planning for the entire metropolitan area may be successfully undertaken, the features to be emphasized in such planning, and the extent of territory to be included in the proposed metropolitan planning district".

The committee will determine whether the financing of the project should be undertaken by private funds or by a publicly constituted body.

## A BUREAU OF HOUSING AND REGIONAL PLANNING FOR NEW YORK STATE

During the session of the New York legislature which has recently come to a close Governor Alfred E. Smith sent to that body a special message recommending the appointment in the office of the State Architect of a Commission on Housing and Regional Planning to study the housing needs of the state, and more particularly to examine into the question of whether an emergency still exists in New York City that would warrant the extension of the present Tax Exemption and Rent Control Laws.

A bill to carry out the Governor's recommendations was introduced in the closing days of the legislative session and is now awaiting the Governor's signature, which it will undoubtedly receive.

This bill creates a Bureau of Housing and Regional Planning in the State Architect's office to be in charge of a Commission consisting of 8 members including the State Architect, the State Commissioner of Highways, the Industrial Commissioner and 5 lay members to be appointed by the State Architect. The members of the Commission are to serve without salary but to have their necessary expenses paid. A salaried secretary is provided for.

The powers and duties of this Commission are outlined in the bill as follows:

1. Study housing needs and conditions in the state and prepare plans adapted to meet such needs and conditions.
2. Collect and distribute information relating to housing and community planning and study means of lowering rents on dwellings by securing economy in the construction and the arrangement of the buildings.
3. Assist in the preparation of legislation and regulations in relation to housing, Zoning and planning throughout the state.
4. Co-operate with local housing boards or similar bodies in cities and localities and with state and federal authorities.
5. Make a report to the governor and to the legislature in respect to matters within its jurisdiction.



These are what may be termed the permanent powers and duties of the Commission for its appointment as a permanent body is undoubtedly contemplated. In addition a special duty in the present housing emergency is imposed upon the Commission of examining housing conditions, prevailing rents and available dwelling space and to determine whether or not such emergency still exists and the extent to which such emergency requires governmental or legislative action.

The bill carries an appropriation of \$10,000 to carry out the purposes of the measure.

If the right appointments are made and the Commission proceeds to carry out its work in line with the purpose of this measure and does not attempt to ride strange hobbies, much good should result from its appointment.

## PITTSBURGH'S ZONING ORDINANCE

A comprehensive Zoning ordinance for the city of Pittsburgh was presented to the City Council by the Department of City Planning on January 22nd, 1923. This ordinance is the result of careful study and consideration by the City Planning Commission of the Zoning problems, as applied to the peculiar conditions existing in Pittsburgh covering a period of nearly three years.

The Commission appointed by the former municipal administration and citizens and associations interested in civic progress secured the passage of an enabling act by the Pennsylvania legislature in 1919. Immediately thereafter steps were taken to secure the necessary appropriations and effect an organization for the purpose of taking up an intensive study of the Zoning problem. The organization was completed and work of preparing the necessary studies commenced in March 1920.

Work on field surveys, maps, etc., was sufficiently advanced to enable the Commission to prepare a preliminary draft of the Zoning ordinance to present for criticisms and suggestions to the National Conference on City Planning held in Pittsburgh, May 1921. The holding of the National Conference in this city resulted in the creation of a public interest in the broad field of city planning and the necessity for the early passage of a Zoning ordinance. This increased public interest, together with the benefits of the criticism and suggestions made on the preliminary draft, enabled the City Planning Commission to continue its study of the Zoning problem with a broader vision of the subject.

Additional studies were made, the maps revised and the text of the ordinance rewritten. The Commission, however, did not reach a final agreement on certain phases in time to present the ordinance to City Council, so that sufficient hearings and consideration could be given to the subject before the close of the administration. The ordinance was therefore delayed until a new administration came into power and a new Planning Commission appointed by Mayor William A. Magee.

The Commission was reorganized in May 1922, with the appointment of the following members: Frederick Bigger, Architect and Town Planner to Citizens Committee on City Plan, Secretary; Charles A. Finley, Director of Public Works; Dr. John T. Holdsworth, Vice President, Bank of Pittsburgh; James F. Malone, Councilman; W. C. Rice, Realtor and Housing Manager and Morris Knowles, Chairman. The following members of the former commission were reappointed: James M. Clark, Attorney, Vice Chairman; James D. Hailman, Member of Citizens Committee on City Plan, and A. J. Kelly, Jr., President Commonwealth Real Estate Company. All the members of the Planning Commission are Pittsburghers, familiar with the city, its growth and its needs. They represent among their number special knowledge, experience in law, engineering, banking, economics and civics, architecture, housing, real estate and town planning.

The reorganized Commission retained the full staff employed during the previous administration and, therefore has had the benefit of the experience and intimate knowledge of local conditions thus acquired. The staff consists of: U. N. Arthur, Chief Engineer, Charles F. Miller, Assistant Engineer, and Basil R. Pace, Recording Secretary and five draftsmen and assistants. In this way, all the detail studies, diagrams, maps, etc., which had been prepared, were thus promptly made ready for careful and painstaking study by the new Commission and revised for presentation to City Council.

The Commission furthermore believed that one of its chief duties was to familiarize the general public with all questions involved, in order that it might have the benefit of criticisms, as well as constructive suggestions that would thus be offered. In order to accomplish this purpose, 59 meetings were held throughout the city with various Boards of Trade, civic organizations, Community Clubs, etc., as well as central down town meetings. The total attendance at these meetings was 3100. In addition,

four daily advertised public hearings were held, one in each of the large geographical districts of the city. Since the ordinance was presented to the City Council, additional public hearings have been held by Council each Thursday afternoon.

The concensus of opinion throughout the city is favorable to the passage of the ordinance, although some individuals and organizations have criticised certain features of the ordinance, while endorsing the general principle. The point most generally attacked is the limitation of the height of buildings in the downtown section, "to a flat height of 125 feet, plus an additional height equal to the width of the widest street upon which the building fronts; provided that the front wall of such additional height shall set back on a ratio of one foot horizontally for each two feet of vertical height". The Commission, however, has on file written statements endorsing the height limitations, as fixed in the ordinance, from more property owners than have been represented, at the public hearings, opposing such a height limitation. In many cases these written statements suggest a lower height limit than that fixed by the ordinance.

As the majority of the criticisms presented to Council seem to be founded on misreading or misinterpretation of the text of the ordinance, the members of the Commission and staff have arranged a series of meetings with individuals and organizations, for the purpose of correcting such misapprehension and endeavoring to reach an amicable understanding where the criticism seems to be well founded. It is believed that these meetings have resulted in removing much of the opposition to the ordinance.

MORRIS KNOWLES, C. E.  
Chairman, Pittsburgh City Plan Commission

## IOWA'S NEW ZONING LAW

In our last issue we referred to the resolutions adopted by the Iowa Realtors Association urging the enactment of a new Zoning Enabling Act for the State of Iowa. A bill to carry out this recommendation following closely the lines of the U. S. Department of Commerce Standard Zoning Enabling Act was introduced in the Iowa legislature this winter and had the active support of the Iowa Town Planning Association of which Mr. Rolland S. Wallis is the active and efficient executive officer. Word has just reached us that the new

Zoning Enabling Act has become a law and it will now be possible for cities and towns throughout Iowa to protect themselves against the dangers which lie in unzoned communities.

An admirable presentation of the fundamental principles involved in Zoning laws is to be found in a paper entitled "How to Accomplish Zoning in Iowa" presented by A. G. Bauder, President of the Cedar Rapids Real Estate Board, at the State Realtor's Convention held in Fort Dodge last December. All students of Zoning should obtain a copy of this interesting document.

## CLEVELAND ZONING ORDINANCE STILL HANGING FIRE

The Cleveland Zoning Ordinance is "an unconscionable time aborning". After months of discussion it is still hanging fire. Recently, as a result of renewed discussion there seems a greater likelihood of its finally being enacted into law. As in Philadelphia, Detroit, Pittsburgh and Chicago, the chief bone of contention has been the height limitations. The height limit as originally proposed was set at 150 feet. This was strenuously opposed by building owners and managers who pointed out that this height was far from sufficient to yield adequate returns on investment and that the city already had a number of higher buildings. By agreement between various groups and organizations interested it has now been determined to make the height limit 250 feet. Whether with this very material concession the Cleveland ordinance can now be enacted into law remains to be seen.

## REALTORS AND ZONING

We referred in our last issue to the splendid support given to the Zoning movement by the leading realtors of the country as represented by the National Association of Real Estate Boards. That support is constantly being sustained and augmented. Irving B. Hiett, Realtor of Toledo, and a member of the Hoover Zoning Committee, in a recent report made to the National Association of Real Estate Boards urged that all realtors make a thorough study of Zoning adding that:



No city can afford to be without Zoning and no activity has been undertaken that is so beneficial to real estate as Zoning. Zoning affects every piece of real property, and realtors should take the lead in having the best possible Zoning ordinance adopted for their city.

Secretary Herb Nelson in his annual report stated that the Information Bureau of the Association is building up a library on Zoning and City Planning and added that Zoning, since it imposes limitations on real property, is of vital interest to realtors. He added that there are 131 cities in the United States which either had adopted or were in process of formulating Zoning ordinances on January first, and that real estate boards everywhere are taking an active and leading part in the preparation of these ordinances.

## PROGRESS IN PLANNING AND ZONING

The National Conference on City Planning which recently held a most successful conference at Baltimore, has published a revised edition of its pamphlet "Progress in Planning and Zoning" corrected up to April first. This pamphlet consists of a list of those cities in the United States which have shown an interest in City Planning either by making City Planning studies or by the appointment of City Planning Boards including Zoning Boards. These are grouped by states alphabetically with the name of the city, the kind of plan, namely, whether it is a complete one, a Zoning Ordinance or merely a study, the name of the planner or expert employed and the organization under whose auspices it has been made, namely, whether it is a Plan Commission, a Park Commission or some other body.

Copies of this interesting document can be obtained from the National City Planning Conference, 130 East 22nd Street, N.Y.C.

## PRIZE ESSAY ON PLATTING

Frank B. Williams, whose book on the Law of the City Plan and Zoning we refer to elsewhere in this issue and who for many years has been a close student of City Planning and Zoning, has recently offered a prize of \$250 to students of Har-

vard University for the best essay on "The Laws and Regulations Relating to Platting of Land in the United States as Affecting the Desirability of Lots for Dwelling Purposes." To the essay may be appended material in the form of tables, diagrams, plans, bibliography, indexes &c., not exceeding in all 3,000 words or its equivalent in pages. Two or more competitors may collaborate, the prizes to be divided among them in case they are successful. The competition closes on June first and is open to students in any department of Harvard University and to men who have been graduated from any department within three years. A jury consisting of Albert S. Bard, Thomas Adams and Nelson P. Lewis will judge the material submitted.

## A CITY PLANNING AND ZONING MANUAL

Preliminary announcement has been made of a "Manual of Information on City Planning and Zoning" prepared by Theodora Kimball, Librarian of the School of Landscape Architecture, Harvard University, to be issued by the Harvard University Press about June first.

This Manual will contain City Planning Facts; Suggestions on Publicity Campaigns for City Planning; a list of national organizations interested in city planning; a list of periodicals regularly devoting space to city planning and zoning; a selected list of unpublished theses on special subjects in the field prepared by students in the city planning course at the Harvard University School of Landscape Architecture and available for consultation there; a list of 25 titles for a city planning library; and a comprehensive bibliography of over 1500 references on city and town planning, including references on regional, rural, and national planning.

In the introductory chapter entitled "City Planning Facts" Miss Kimball has prepared the best elementary statement of What City Planning Is that has yet come to our notice and we hope that this part of her book will be printed as a separate pamphlet and given wide circulation throughout the United States. It discusses City Planning under the following topics: Industry and Homes; Cities, Towns and Regions; Remedial and Preventive Planning; What City Planning Includes; Planning Comprehensively; Basic Legislation; The City Planning Commission; Expert Advice; The Survey and the Plan; A Constructive Programme; Financing the Investment; Present Advantages and Fu-

ture Returns; Why Delay? Cities With Plans Adopted or in Progress; Sources of Information.

As usual Miss Kimball has made her annual report on "A Survey of City and Regional Planning in the United States," for the year 1922, published in the January issue of the *Journal of Landscape Architecture* and also published separately in pamphlet form. Students of the city planning movement in the United States will obtain from Miss Kimball's survey a knowledge of the development of the city planning movement that can be obtained by no other method. We heartily commend it to all persons interested in this important question.

## THE LAW OF CITY PLANNING AND ZONING

FRANK B. WILLIAMS

Mr. Williams has produced a very readable book of reference. Its arrangement is excellent, its definitions clear, and its compilations of laws and decisions complete. The intelligent citizen seeking for the meaning of city planning, and the professional city planner seeking for a solution of technical legal tangles will both have their questions answered.

Mr. Williams shows his thorough acquaintance with the relation of the various city planning elements by the nice emphasis which is placed on the more pressing city problems. Thus he considers in a separate chapter "On Street Setbacks and Traffic Regulations" the circulation of traffic in the larger cities, and, in chapters on excess and zone condemnation, the law of eminent domain as applied to the replanning of cities. At present the right of cities to take private property for public purposes is strictly limited to their actual necessities in almost all our states. This legal restriction works often to the disadvantage of a proposed public improvement, particularly in cases of street widenings where, as the result of condemnation proceedings, remnant lots may be left of the wrong size or shape for good development. A few states have passed laws, known usually as excess condemnation legislation, which allow the taking of more land than is absolutely necessary for the improvement. Mr. Williams gives full consideration to the subject both in this country and in Europe.

The regulation of buildings by the creation of zones under municipal ordinances, which New York City was the first to un-

dertake in 1916, has now been established in 65 cities and towns of the United States and almost as many more are working on such ordinances. The discussion in three chapters, "The Principle of Building Regulation and Zoning," "Zoning in Europe," and "Zoning in Canada and the United States," covers most adequately the entire subject.

Most helpful is the appendix with its bibliography and table of statutes.

FLAVEL SHURTLEFF  
New York City

## LIMITING THE HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS

"Studies on Building Height Limitations in Large Cities," a book of 299 pages published by the Chicago Real Estate Board Library, is exactly what its title indicates.

The Zoning Commission which has been charged with the preparation of a Zoning Ordinance for Chicago was fortunate in receiving the active cooperation of the Chicago Real Estate Board. This was, in part, secured through the activities of a special Zoning committee of the Board, and through a Citizens' Committee on Building Height Limitations brought together by the Board's Zoning Committee. The book clearly indicates the wide scope of investigations carried on by these groups which included among other things, careful reviews of building height ordinances promulgated and proposed in other cities throughout the world, consultation with specialists along Zoning and collateral lines and detailed studies by members of the committees.

Edward M. Bassett, the chairman of the Heights of Building Commission in New York City, gave four or more addresses in Chicago, which are reported practically in full, together with the discussions which followed them. Mr. Bassett also prepared the preface of the book, wherein the problem is clearly stated in the following words:

Height regulations not only limit height of new buildings but insure a fair division of light and air among lot owners. The erection of unnecessarily high skyscrapers is no longer a sign of city progress, but rather a sign of city ignorance. Buildings of moderate height broaden out a business center. Values are equalized instead of being absorbed by a few. Office business can be conducted in the daylight instead of under artificial light. There is greater convenience and economy in every way. One would say that economical



reasons would sooner or later prevent people from building skyscrapers.

An introductory note and an outline of the purposes of the investigation were prepared by Mr. Charles M. Nichols and Mr. Jacob M. Crane, Jr., chairman and secretary respectively of the Zoning Committee of the Chicago Real Estate Board.

Perhaps the greatest contribution contained in the work of the Committee is that of Dr. W. A. Evans, Health Editor of the Chicago Tribune, who pointed out among other things, "that the improvement in health in fifty years has been due to improvement in summer health; winter health is about as bad as it was fifty years ago." His conclusion is obvious. He also states that:

The limitation of the height of buildings relates itself to problems of the acute respiratory diseases by reason of the decrease of sunlight, diffused light and air circulation on the pavements and the atmosphere between the buildings, and by reason of the interference with light and air inside them, and also by reason of the congestion on the street cars during the peak hours.

His review of the work lately done by the medical profession in studying the effect of sunlight upon bacteria is by far the most concrete contribution in the book.

Another rather notable contribution is that of Mr. George C. Nimmons, Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, who prepared a comparative statement of earnings of first-class modern office buildings of different heights from 5 to 30 stories, in an attempt to discover the economic limit under certain assumed conditions. While the assumptions made by Mr. Nimmons and the method of analysis followed by him have been characterized by several other specialists, and while his work was not as fundamental as has been that of some others, this feature of the contribution made by Mr. Nimmons, together with his suggestion of the incorporation in the Chicago Ordinance of the New York setback principle, ranks his work high.

Mr. Earle Schultz, President of the National Association of Building Owners and Managers, contributes statistical information of value with reference to the gross and net income and expense of operation of 185 office buildings in over 40 cities in the United States.

The remainder of the book not given over to statistical information about the suggested methods of building height con-

trol in other large cities, extracts from the proposed Chicago ordinance and similar data, is largely a reprint of opinions of specialists on traffic and transportation, fire prevention and fire fighting, and to an even greater degree, of expression of opinion (generally without a fact basis) by various real estate owners, building managers and other interested Chicago citizens.

While it should be stated that the work done as discussed in the book under review carried certain studies further than did the Heights of Buildings Commission in New York, and its successor, the Committee on Buildings Districts and Restrictions, the work of the latter still maintains the lead.

Much straw must be threshed by a reader of the Chicago "Studies" in order to extract the real values. The book is sold for \$2.60 postpaid and is worth the price to librarians, officials charged with the formulation of Zoning ordinances in the larger cities and special students of the building height problem.

ERNEST P. GOODRICH

Technical Advisory Corporation, New York

## THREE TOWN PLANNING REPORTS

### SPRINGFIELD, WORCESTER AND EAST ORANGE

A Comprehensive Report for East Orange, New Jersey, a Progress Report for Springfield, Massachusetts, and a Preliminary Reconnaissance Survey for Worcester, Massachusetts, have been completed within a few months by the Technical Advisory Corporation of New York. Students of Town Planning will find a study of these reports exceedingly interesting and instructive.\*

The reader who examines these three reports is impressed at once with the vast amount of detail which has been studied in the field, tabulated in the office and used as the basis for a series of unusual diagrams and charts of comparison. Ingenious graphical

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\*The first report occupies 75 pages, with a dozen plates and several folded maps; the second occupies, 60 pages and is profusely illustrated with plates, charts, and photographs; the third occupies 36 large pages of the Sunday Telegram Magazine and is also fully illustrated with diagrams, maps, and half-tone plans some of which are in color. The Building Zone Ordinance for Springfield has been printed in full by the Springfield Daily News for January 17th, and will be included in the final Report now in preparation for that city. The ordinance was adopted unanimously December 27, 1922.

tables are used freely in all the reports, and these form the basis for conclusions and recommendations. See for example the Vehicular Traffic Graph for Worcester which "shows the total number of vehicles which pass through the downtown section of the city at each hour of the day ranging from 440 at 8 A. M. to 750 at 5:30 P. M."

See also the "Values of Elements used in the Determination of the Best Site of Civic Centre" for East Orange. In this table a weight factor is given for nearness to trolleys, parks, business district, also weights for size, topography, changes in population, civic pride, design, and many other points making 25 in all. These factors are weighed in comparing a series of 9 possible sites.

In the Springfield Report the diagrams showing the relation of the city plan to the four great cardinal points of Circulation, Work, Government, and Living, is instructive. The series of 6 photographs in the same report showing 9 views of the same traffic congestion point at intervals during the day illustrates an excellent method of bringing home to the ordinary citizen certain brasstack facts with which town planning must deal.

The extraordinary pains taken in collecting facts and coordinating them is shown in the key to the large folder "City Plan Map" of East Orange (about 24 by 30 inches, scale 400). This map shows over 50 types of facts indicated by symbols, figures, and colors. Among these facts the following appear among many others: street gradients, street width in feet, old and new bridges, types of railroad embankments with or without retaining walls, tenements over stores, jitney routes existing and proposed, and land values. Although the population of this city is about 50,000 the position and general shape of all buildings is shown, and, in the case of dwellings, the number of families in each house is indicated on the figure representing the house.

All these Reports attempt to reach out to grasp the whole physical problem. Take for example the thoroughfare plans of Springfield and Worcester. These schemes are based on contoured surveys which cover the countryside for many miles beyond the city limits. The relation of the through routes of the city to the distant thoroughfares of neighboring towns and villages is kept in mind constantly. In studying the location of needed playgrounds, graphical charts are shown of juvenile delinquency cases indicating the homes of delinquents where cases were settled in or out of court. In studying traffic congestion,

a careful study is made with graphs showing existing parking spaces, the number of passenger automobiles which pass through the downtown section of the city each hour of the day, and the comparative speed of automobile traffic in miles per hour at certain important street junctions. Consideration is also given to the financing of public improvements. Here again graphs are used to show "the relationship between net bonding limit and cost of proposed improvements."

In the East Orange Report an interesting street schedule is given on page 38 naming the dates at which the widening and extension of the street should be taken up for final consideration.

The following topics discussed in the East Orange Report indicate the scope of the studies: Physical Conditions, History, Population and Races, Industry, Trade and Wealth, Food and Household Supplies, Street Traffic, Parking of Vehicles, Thoroughfare System, Minor Streets, Transit Lines, Railways, Bridges and Grade Crossings, Aviation, Street Construction, Substructures, Water Supply, Sewage Disposal, Garbage, Waste and Snow Removal, Lighting, Welfare and Sanitation, Housing, Public Comfort Stations, Schools, Commercial and Private Recreation, Playgrounds, Parks and Playgrounds, Parks and Parkways, Landscape Architecture, Civic Art in Streets and Parks, Civic Centre, Building Districts and Restrictions, Ordinances regarding Garages, Smoke and Sanitation, Finance, Laws, Regional Planning, Comprehensive Coordinated Plan, Getting Results.

As a whole these three valuable Reports indicate that the minds of at least one group of town planners revolve persistently about facts, and that conclusions should be based on mathematical reasoning and not upon opinion or personal taste.

The fact also appears, that the "man in the street" is to be won over to modern Town Planning by charts, diagrams and lists rather than by phrases or by elaborately rendered pictures. Of course this is as it should be. Twenty years ago few "men in the street" would read a town planning list or try to decipher a curve of coordinates. To-day the same men, or their children, are suspicious of anything that lacks lists or curves!

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF

Boston



## EXPERIMENTAL HOUSES FOR COLD CLIMATES\*

Prof. Bugge in 1917 pointed out the need of a practical experiment to ascertain what structural materials and types of wall construction were economically best adapted to the different—for the most part very exacting—climatic conditions in the principal sections of Norway. New structural materials had been placed on the market and foreign types of wall construction had been introduced. These were less expensive than those customary in Norway; a fact well calculated, particularly at a time of rising prices, to induce their wide acceptance despite want of knowledge concerning their durability in a severe climate and their power to exclude the cold. Their operating cost for repairs and fuel might easily outweigh their low construction cost. The fuel cost is an important item in a country which spends annually about 150,000,000 crowns in the heating, as against 100,000,000 crowns in the construction of dwellings. An active own-your-home movement was under way at the time and Prof. Bugge felt that it should not be jeopardized by indiscriminate exploitation of construction novelties.

With support from the State and from the municipality of Trondhjem and with cooperation from a number of interested manufacturers, 27 one-room cellar and attic houses of identical size, design and exposure, were erected in 1919 on the grounds of the Technical High School of Norway under Prof. Bugge's direction. An automatically regulated electric heater was installed in each house, together with instruments recording the consumption of current, as well as the temperature and the moisture content of the air in the room and, where hollow wall construction was employed, in the spaces between inner and outer walls.

The results of the experiment were expressed in terms comparing the building cost and the fuel consumption of the newer constructions with those of the constructions permitted by existing building laws in Norway. They demonstrated the need of

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\* *Experimental Houses Erected at the Technical High School of Norway, Trondhjem.* Report on a practical experiment to determine the relative economy of various kinds of structural materials and types of wall construction for the purpose of producing warm and inexpensive dwellings. By Andreas Bugge, architect, Professor at the Technical High School of Norway. Paper, 9 x 12 in., illustr., 98 pp. Trondhjem: F. Bruns Bokhandels Forlag, 1922.

legal revisions and were of great value both to the public authorities and to the building industry. Because of differences in climate, building laws, construction costs and other conditions, perhaps the chief interest in the experiment to us in America lies in the suggestion it offers for a mode of procedure in testing the merit of certain phases of our own building laws.

In general, it was found that with respect to economy of fuel, houses of wood are superior to houses of masonry; hollow wall construction is superior to solid wall construction; the outer veneer in a hollow wall may be relatively thin if it is impervious to moisture; storm windows and storm doors are about 20% more efficient than single doors.

M. A. MIKKELSEN  
New York

# Housing Betterment

JULY, 1923

A Journal of Housing Advance

Issued Quarterly by  
The National Housing Association





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# Housing Betterment

105 EAST 22ND STREET, NEW YORK CITY

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Vol. 12

JULY, 1923

No. 3

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## IN ENGLAND

**T**HERE has been little change in the housing situation in England since we reported on it so fully in our last issue.

The new Housing Bill has been progressing through Parliament, and, on the whole, one would say that the Government has emerged triumphantly from the situation. Owing to the skillful handling of this measure by the Minister of Health, Neville Chamberlain, the bill has gotten through the Committee Stage with comparatively slight modification and with no yielding of any of its essential principles. This has been due very largely to the skill with which the measure has been handled and the wisdom which has been shown by the Government in consenting to a number of amendments which were very earnestly desired and which have in no sense detracted from the fundamental purposes of the measure. The bill is now passing through the Report Stage and probably by the time this journal is issued will have become a law and received the King's assent.

## THE HOUSING BILL AMENDED

As was to have been expected, the provision of the bill which was the storm center of opposition, viz., the limitation of the size of the house to receive the subsidy to a house of 850 feet has been amended, the Government agreeing to extend the maximum measurement of subsidized 2-story houses from 850 to 950 superficial feet, and of flats, or one-storied houses, from 780 to 880 superficial feet. Every one seems to be satisfied with this change.

The discussion of the bill in committee has brought out a number of its features which were not apparent at first. In response to a question in Parliament, the Minister of Health said recently

that under the provisions of the new bill it would be possible for a Local Authority to arrange so that working-class tenants might purchase houses built by the Local Authority, or by private enterprise with the subsidy, on a system of weekly payments or instalments.

Another amendment made to the bill in Committee was one moved by the Minister of Health, increasing the amount of grant that might be made to a Public Utility Society.

On the much discussed question of open building and the limiting of the number of houses to the acre, an amendment was offered to the bill in Committee to limit the number of houses to 12 to the acre. This the Government refused to accede to, stating that they could not impose on private enterprise restrictions and limitations which the Government was not ready to assume itself.

Efforts were also made to amend the bill with regard to the lump-sum subsidy by describing the class of tenant to whom the houses should be let or sold and fixing the rent or price. These amendments the Minister declined to accept, as tending to interfere with the builder's discretion and thus discouraging private enterprise and consequently defeating the chief purpose of the bill.

Another proposal offered was that every house built under the measure should be furnished with a bathroom with hot and cold water supply, and that every house should have attached or adjacent to it a garden plot of 10 perches or thereabouts. The Government agreed to accept an amendment which would make mandatory the provision of a "fixed bath" in the houses receiving the subsidy, but declined to accede to the suggestion of hot water supply or of a separate bathroom.

Other amendments have been made to the bill in Committee to strengthen it and to make it more precise and definite in some of its terms. One of these provides that Local Authorities before granting assistance for a building shall satisfy themselves that the house will be in all respects fit for human habitation.

### THE NEW POLICY SHOWS EVIDENCES OF SUCCESS

That the new housing policy of the Government is likely to be availed of when the new bill becomes a law is evidenced by the action already taken by numerous Local Authorities



throughout England. In response to a Parliamentary question recently, Lord Eustace Percy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, stated that housing schemes submitted by 100 Local Authorities had been provisionally approved as coming within the scope of the new Housing Act and that 11 of these proposals related wholly or partly to the erection of houses by private enterprise.

## PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

That private enterprise is beginning to "come back" is evidenced by recent official returns. According to returns received from 1067 Local Authorities 14,763 houses had been erected by private enterprise during the 6 months ending March first, last, and 17,693 houses were in course of erection on that date.

## INCREASED COST OF BUILDING MATERIALS

As the Labor members of Parliament feared, the price of building materials has recently advanced considerably in England, notwithstanding the creation by the Government of a Committee on the Price of Building Materials, and notwithstanding the pronouncement of the Minister of Health at the time of the introduction of the Housing Bill, that the Government intended to deal with this question with a firm hand. As he then put it:

We do not intend that this great fresh burden upon the taxpayer shall be diverted from the purpose for which it is intended in order to enrich a few individuals.

A bill to deal with combinations in the building industry was recently introduced in the House of Commons. It places upon the Board of Trade—a Government department—the duty of obtaining information concerning the operations of such combinations and the regulation of prices, control of output, freight rates &c., insofar as they tend to create monopolies or restraint of trade. Under the terms of this measure the Board of Trade is empowered to apply to a specially constituted tribunal for an order to compel the firms to furnish certain information. This tribunal—very much like our American legislative Investigating Committees—is given very full power to deal with the

situation and may subpoena books and papers and compel the attendance of witnesses &c.

Responding to a question in the House of Commons as to whether the new Committee on the Price of Building Materials had taken any action with reference to the recent increase of prices for light castings, Mr. Chamberlain stated that the Committee had asked for an explanation of the recent increase of 10% and that a sub-committee was now investigating the matter.

Responding to a further question Lord Eustace Percy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, stated that this Committee and its various sub-committees had held 6 meetings and that thus far it had been principally engaged on a general survey of prices, with particular regard to the increase of light castings, and that thus far the Committee was vested with sufficient power to deal with the situation.

Commenting on this situation *The Building News* of London recently had the following to say:

The prices of building materials have begun to rise. Our information makes it clear that the only serious rise at present is occurring in light castings, especially in rain water goods and certain lines that were much reduced in price by manufacturers during the slump. There have been fluctuations, too, in the price of oil, lead and turpentine, just as in normal times. With regard to bricks, the number of speculators putting up houses has greatly increased the demand, and so long as the supply is inadequate prices are bound to keep up, but there are signs of future reduction. Certain lines in builders' hardware are actually being reduced, for as the demand increases, so manufacturers are able to make more cheaply.

## LABOR COSTS DECREASING

In striking contrast to the labor situation in the United States, the cost of labor in the building industry in England has materially declined. We reported in our last issue the avoidance of a great national strike in that country and the reference of the questions involved—chiefly concerning the reduction of the rate of wages—to arbitration. Since that time the official arbitrator Sir Hugh Fraser, has made his award

which is to the following effect :

Beginning on May 26, the rate of wages shall be reduced as follows and not varied before January, 1924 :

1. Grade A craftsmen, with the exception of London, and Grade B craftsmen shall be reduced 1d. an hour.
2. In the London area craftsmen reduced  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. an hour.
3. Grade C craftsmen reduced  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. an hour.
4. Laborers' wages maintained at 75% of the craftsmen's wages as nearly as possible.

More important than this definite decision on rate of wages—and a determination which may serve as a model for adjustment of the difficult and involved situation that exists in the United States—is the Arbitrator's decision that the agreement governing wages and working conditions shall be amended so as to provide that: "FUTURE ALTERATIONS OF WAGES SHALL BE DEPENDENT SOLELY ON VARIATIONS IN THE COST OF LIVING."

On the much debated question as to when the existing agreement between the employers and the men expired, he rejected the contention of the men that the employers were debarred from enforcing a change in wages prior to January of next year.

So much with regard to the rate of pay. On the question of the number of hours that were to constitute a working week, which was referred to a referendum vote of the members of the unions in the building trades, the proposal to extend the working hours from 44 to 47 a week during the summer months was rejected by an overwhelming vote of 118,000 against the proposal to 11,600 for it—a majority against it of 106,400 votes. The question now goes to the National Wages and Conditions Council for decision; failing an agreement there, to be referred to the Arbitrator.

It is significant in this connection that the latest official figures showed the amazing total of unemployed in the various branches of the building trades as 101,716.

## THE NEW RENT CONTROL BILL

At last the Government has introduced its long expected bill dealing with the de-control of rents, the chief feature of which is that June, 1925, is set as the date for de-control to begin.

The new measure thus avoids the pitfalls into which the bill sponsored by Mr. Neville Chamberlain's predecessor fell, and which was responsible for the defeat of three members of the Government.

The new measure is an extremely complicated one full of technicalities. While it does not apply to new houses, it indirectly affects the construction of new buildings; for, there is no certainty under it as to when the builder will be assured of obtaining the fullest market value for his former investment, as under the new bill, rent control may not disappear altogether until 1930. The bill practically tells the landlord that he cannot obtain the full market value for his house until 1925 unless it becomes empty in the meantime, and that after 1925 he cannot be sure of getting a full return on his money. The Government has faced an awkward dilemma and has apparently done the best it could under the difficult circumstances.

The *Building News* gives the following summary of the bill's main provisions:

Control of all houses to be continued to June 24, 1925.

Houses to be decontrolled whenever landlord regains possession.

Landlords who owned houses before June, 1922, may obtain possession, if required for themselves, any of their children, any person resident with them, or any person engaged in their whole-time employment.

Houses may be acquired if needed by the local authority, or for any purpose in the public interest.

Landlord may obtain possession if the tenant, without his consent, has sublet the house.

Tenant may appeal against increase of rent if house is in state of disrepair.

Rent of sublet house may be increased by 10%.

Excessive charge for furniture or fixtures or attendance to be regarded as offence against the Act.

County Courts to have power of determining any question of the amount of rent or of increase of rent permitted.

After the expiry of the Act tenant may appeal to County Court against eviction on the ground of exceptional hardship.

To assist County Court, the Minister of Health may establish Reference Committees for consideration and report on rent, character, or condition of houses.

Procedure of Reference Committees to be settled by the Minister of Health.

Reference Committees may decide questions of rent submitted by tenant and landlord.

This section to continue until June, 1930, unless previously repealed



by resolutions of both Houses of Parliament.

The measure to apply to Scotland.

The bill seems to be making excellent progress through Parliament. It has already had its second reading when it was carried by a vote of 287 to 123—a Government majority of 164 votes. The measure is now going through the Committee Stage where various amendments are being offered. The chief opposition that has thus far appeared to the bill in the Parliamentary Debates is the provision for a period of gradual de-control extending until 1930. One feature of the bill which has given rise to considerable discussion is the provision for the setting up of Reference Committees or modified Rent Courts to which landlords and tenants may take their disputes and get a settlement, without the delay and burden of litigation.

Commenting on the rent situation a close student of the housing situation in England says:

The new Rent Restriction Act is in my humble opinion hardly worth noticing. Any Government could pass any scheme at the moment for de-control so long as the date of de-control is put sufficiently long ahead. The tussle will be when that date begins to draw near. There will be a number of people who will oppose de-control tooth and nail because they think that de-control will be to the advantage of the "bloated capitalist", and if the housing shortage is still acute they will pull such a majority of electors that the Government will have no choice whatever but to bring in another Act, postponing to yet another date the operation of the previous bill. The Rent Restriction Acts are like the famous fleas; they carry others on their back.

What Rent Control ultimately means in any country is evidenced by recent statements in Parliament. In response to a "Question", Lord Eustace Percy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, said recently:

That it was impossible to estimate with any accuracy the number of houses protected by the various Acts, as many houses, although within the rental limits, were for differ-

ent reasons not so protected. But, taking all the houses within the rental limits of the three Acts, whether protected or not, the number of houses was approximately 7,300,000 under the Act of 1915, 700,000 under the Act of 1919, and 150,000 under the Act of 1920.

## SLUM CLEARANCE

No phase of the housing question has greater interest for housing reformers than how to get rid of our slums and how to prevent the growth of future slums. The problem is one that affects every country in the world.

Strangely enough it is the one phase of the housing question with reference to which least has been accomplished, although the need is greatest and the consequence of neglect the most serious.

England in this field, as in other fields of housing, leads the world; and while the English housing reformer is very greatly dissatisfied with the comparatively meagre results thus far achieved, from the point of view of results achieved in America, England occupies a lofty pinnacle. For, in America practically nothing has been done to grapple with this vital problem which more seriously concerns the people of America than almost any other question; for, the slum is no respecter of persons and extends its sinister influence into every phase of our national life.

Recent discussions that have been had of this question in London have therefore peculiar interest for American students of the housing problem. One of the most scholarly and at the same time practical discussions of this subject that we have seen in many years will be found in two lectures delivered by G. Topham Forrest, Architect to the London County Council, delivered as Chadwick Lectures. As Mr. Forrest aptly says:

When I received the invitation from the Chadwick trustees to deliver two lectures it seemed to me that I could not choose a more fitting subject than "London's Unhealthy Areas". I felt that if Sir Edwin Chadwick\* were alive today he would be gravely concerned that such areas

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\* England's foremost pioneer housing and sanitary reformer who flourished about 1842—(Editor).

existed and would give earnest thought to the possibility of their elimination.

Mr. Forrest's two lectures published in the *Architects' Journal* (London) issues of February 14th and 21st, under the title "London's Unhealthy Areas" not only present the serious conditions which prevail in London, but discuss as well the different methods of clearing slum areas that have been employed in London in the past, and present his views as to the practicable methods by which these areas can be cleared at the present day and the existing population rehoused under conditions that will be both sanitary and at the same time within the purchasing power of the tenants.

### THE EXTENT OF LONDON'S PROBLEM

Mr. Forrest states that according to a publication issued by the London County Council in 1921, there were in the year 1919, about 1900 groups of 3 or more houses which were either insanitary or so congested and badly arranged, or badly situated that they required to be dealt with. These comprised over 24,000 houses occupied by more than 180,000 persons.

Citing further figures as to overcrowding he points out that the recent census shows that the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million people in London occupy upwards of 4 million rooms. Also according to the census over 500,000 people are living more than 2 to a room and nearly 130,000 more than 3 to a room.

Discussing the question of where the people who now live in these unhealthy areas are to be rehoused, he points out that a very considerable proportion of the people are the families of workers who must of necessity live near to where they exercise their calling; and gives as example dock-laborers, many kinds of transport workers, market porters, public service workers such as gas workers, water service workers, police, firemen, postal service, sewer men, scavengers &c.

### NEARNESS TO WORK IMPORTANT

Recognizing that a number of the inhabitants could be housed outside of London he points out that even then the breadwinners would have to travel to their work places a considerable distance—work places which are now within reason-

able distance of where the workers live.

In Birmingham according to Mr. Forrest the open country is only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant from the center of the city—comparatively easy walking distance. In Liverpool it is but 2 miles distant but in London it is from 6 to 7 miles away. From which Mr. Forrest concludes that if the people in these unhealthy areas are to be rehoused it must be on the areas themselves and not some 6 or 7 miles away.

## TYPES OF BUILDINGS FOR REHOUSING

Taking up consideration as to the most suitable type of building to be employed in the reconstruction of the areas that are to be cleared, he discusses 3 types—cottages, 3-story "cottage-flats" and block dwellings (applying that term to buildings of over 3 stories), which Mr. Forrest thinks offer the most practical solution for this problem.

In connection with his article Mr. Forrest presents plans and diagrams showing the different number of persons that could be housed on one particular area, viz., the Brady Street Area, showing that in block dwellings of 5 stories 1600 persons or 85% of those displaced by the slum clearance will be rehoused, at the same time providing a recreation ground of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres greatly needed in the neighborhood. He points out that if, instead of building block dwellings on this area the population was to be rehoused in one-story cottages, not over 23 to the acre, less than 800 people could be rehoused; and with 3-story cottage flats—an intermediate type—1250 of the displaced persons could be rehoused or nearly 380 less than in the 5-story block dwellings and without any recreation space being provided.

### THE "COTTAGE-FLAT"

A new type of 3-story "cottage flat" is described by Mr. Forrest as having many advantages. These types he thinks would be very suitable for sites in the inner suburbs but says that such flats are not suitable for lettings in apartments of less than 3 rooms. As he describes them, this new type of building is as follows:

I have an idea of 3-story "cottage flats" such as might



be employed on the estates I have in mind. The two lower stories are enclosed by brick walls, and the topmost story is entirely within the roof. The rooms are rather larger than is usual in the working-class dwellings in England. This extra size has been obtained by throwing the space usually appropriated by passageways into the rooms themselves. Because of this the bedrooms as well as the "kitchenette" communicate directly with the living-room. This arrangement has certain advantages; it reduces the amount of housework to a minimum, and enables the mother of a young family to go about her duties whilst the younger children are always under her immediate supervision. Each flat has a private covered-in balcony in which domestic washing can be dried and where the younger children can play—again under the mother's eye.

A most interesting discussion of this same question with special emphasis upon the "cottage-flat" type of building, and featuring what we should call in America a "duplex" cottage-flat, with a family having the use of part of two different stories of the building will be found in an article, entitled "Cottage Blocks for London Workers" (in *The Builder* of London, of April 6th) written by J. P. Orr, late Director of Housing of the London County Council.

### LIGHT AND LATITUDE

One of the most interesting features of Mr. Forrest's discussion of this question and one which will have especial interest for all American Town Planners and Zoning experts is the interesting presentation—for the first time so far as we are aware—of the varying amounts of sunlight obtainable at different seasons of the year in the three great metropolitan cities of the world, viz., London, Paris and New York and the consequent different standards that need to prevail in connection with the limitation of the height of buildings in relation to the adjacent open space.

He points out that owing to the fact that London is a northern city, being about 700 miles more northerly than New York, which is situated at about the same distance from the Equator as Naples, it followed that the shadows cast by London's

buildings are longer than those cast by buildings of the same height in Paris and very much longer than any in New York. From which it follows that, in winter, buildings in New York could be built at least 4 stories higher than they could in London without causing any greater obstruction to light. Or, to put it another way, buildings of 9 stories in New York and of 6 stories in Paris would throw shadows no longer than do 5 story buildings in London.

From the point of view of the amount of open space necessary adjacent to such buildings, in winter, between 5-story buildings in London an open space of 158 feet must be left to insure adequate light, whereas Mr. Forrest states that only 131 feet is requisite in Paris and but 82 feet in New York. From which Mr. Forrest evolves a rule with regard to the nearness of buildings of a given height in these different cities.

The presentation of these studies is of incalculable value to the cause of Housing Reform and it is to be hoped that these lectures will be republished in pamphlet form and made available for all students of this question.

## DIFFICULTIES OF SLUM CLEARANCE

The difficulties both practical and financial inherent in any effort to remove slums were very clearly set forth in a recent discussion before the British Town Planning Institute by Mr. L. C. Evans, Town Clerk of Salford—an industrial suburb of Manchester—under the title “Acquiring and Replanning Congested Areas”.

According to Mr. Evans the question resolves itself into a question of money, and any community can deal with the problem provided it is ready to pay the price.

In tracing the efforts to deal with this problem made by the public officials in Manchester and Salford at various times from 1890 down to the present time, he pointed out the difficulties that have been involved heretofore in this question, making it plain in the beginning that there is a great difference between a district that is monotonous and ugly and one that is an “unhealthy area”, from the point of view of the law.

Judging from the experience of Manchester which he cites, human nature is very much the same the world over, for, in the earlier efforts he states that the Council had to buy out

the owners and build other houses for the dispossessed tenants. As he puts it:

Then came the tug-of-war. Owners very naturally wanted as much compensation as possible.\*\*\*\*The net result of clearing these congested areas was that the corporation paid, as the phrase goes, "through the nose" and they had never repeated the experiment. Some of the cleared sites have been sold as vacant land at about half the price per square yard which the Corporation paid for land and buildings. Some of the vacant land is still in hand.

He added that compound interest on the price paid will mount up to a big figure.

The practical, financial and legal difficulties involved in this great and important social question have been presented by Mr. Evans very clearly and it will well repay all students of this question to obtain a copy of this most interesting paper. Copies can be obtained from the British Town Planning Institute, 4, Arundel Street, W. C., London.

## EDINBURGH'S SLUMS

Those familiar with the fascinating city of Edinburgh—one of the most attractive cities in the world—will probably mourn, from the point of view of picturesqueness, the loss of a number of its old buildings in the "old town", but housing reformers and sanitarians cannot help but rejoice at the "Improvement Scheme" which is now being carried out in the Cowgate and Grassmarket areas.

In this area there are at the present time some 631 houses of which 468 are occupied and 163 vacant containing a population of 1524 persons or an average of 3.26 per house or 534 per acre.

This whole area is to be cleared. Many of the existing houses are to be torn down and 180 houses are to be reconstructed in their place. There is probably no city in Great Britain that needs slum clearance or reconstruction of its older houses more than the city of Edinburgh, not even Glasgow.

## SLUM CLEARANCE IN DUNDEE AND ABERDEEN

The need of slum clearance in other Scottish cities has recently been strikingly pointed out in a comprehensive report prepared by Mr. Robert Mitchell, Chief Sanitary Inspector of Dundee. Commenting on the oft-repeated objection to improved housing conditions, that the people will not appreciate them and will abuse them, he has the following to say :

Pessimists declare that given better housing and environment this class of tenant would soon make other slums.

A like theory was advanced when the water-closet system was inaugurated in the city, that all sorts of abuse, misuse, and nuisance would arise in the using of such sanitary conveniences, and it was urged that the dirty, foul-smelling privy midden was good enough or equally suitable for them.

For over 20 years, in an official capacity, I have been going out and in amongst these people, and know well their habits.

Some are terrors to both health officials and owners. They are what we would call undesirables in every respect, but they are only, after all, a fraction of the whole, and no housing conditions will ever alter their methods or nature.

There is a vast majority of cleanly, honest and respectable people, whose means are very limited, and who have to exist under the most unhealthy surroundings.

Further, houses must be made available before the Health Department can fulfil its statutory duties of securing the abatement of overcrowding on even the moderate standard of 400 cubic feet of air space for each occupant; to remedy the growing evil of sex intermingling, both in the adolescent and adult stage of life; and subletting, particularly the smaller sized houses.

Better housing would certainly solve many of our health problems. New houses are wanted, but the need for betterment of our present decadent houses is more urgent.

Leaving out of consideration three unoccupied mansions, there is not at the present time a vacant habitable house to be got within the city.

A recent report submitted for Dundee shows that a complete slum clearance scheme would cost nearly £ 800,000 with an estimated annual loss of over £ 37,000; the sanitary authorities of the city estimate that at present at least £ 20,000 is being spent every year in combating the evils arising from bad housing.



## IN ABERDEEN

In Aberdeen the medical authorities and the housing authorities have combined to issue a valuable report on city housing conditions. In this report it is stated that an essential preliminary to any dealing with the slum areas of that city is the building of 1120 new houses, as housing accommodations must be provided for the population to be rehoused before that population can be wisely displaced.

### WHAT THE WOMEN WANT

All students of house design and house management, including both architects and social workers, will be interested in the Report made by a Committee of the Women's Section of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association entitled "Labor Saving in Small Houses". This Report deals with those questions connected with housing which have especial interest for women—to whom the house is their workshop—and who rightly should be consulted and considered in the planning of the house and its relation to their use, to far greater extent than they have been hitherto in any country.

The Report naturally deals with English types of houses—as the study has been made by a group of English women for use in England—and many of the conditions described, not only do not apply to the United States but some of them are not understandable to the average person in the United States, unfamiliar with the English types of houses.

The Report, however, while it has especial value for England, is of such general interest in many respects that it will well repay careful study by all students of housing and should be especially commended to the architectural profession.

The Report represents the result of many months' work and not only numerous conferences and meetings and discussions, but actual visits to many of the various housing schemes developed in recent years in different parts of England. An effort was made to obtain the views of the tenants occupying the new houses as to what the defects of the houses were and how they could be improved from the tenants' point of view. The Report is published in full in the February and March

issues of the magazine, *Garden Cities and Town Planning*, and can be obtained in pamphlet form from that magazine at a price 1s. 9d. in the United States.

Among the subjects considered and in great detail, may be mentioned the following:

Cooking, Heating and Hot Water Supply; Washing Machines; Consumption of Fuel; Separation of the Functions of a Kitchen Range; Central Heating and Hot Water Supply; Types of Cooking Stoves; Short Walking Circuit; Use of the Living-Room; Position of the Cooking-Stove; Ventilation; Home Workshop; Dresser; Kitchen Cabinet; Cupboards; Shelves; Sink; Drainer; Plate Rack; Skirtings (Baseboards); Larder; Storeroom; Perambulator and Bicycle Storage; Coal Storage; Bathroom; Washhouse; Instruction in the Use of Appliances; Tests; Insulation.

As indicative of the thoroughness with which this study has been made, the topics discussed under the subject of Gas Cookers are significant. Under this subject are discussed such questions as Efficiency Test, Conservation of Heating, Ease in Cleaning, Ease in Use &c.

We quote the following extracts from the Report as indicating the interest that the Report would have for our readers:

The most important piece of labor-saving apparatus is the house itself, and if this is wrongly planned mistakes cannot afterwards be rectified by the introduction of labor-saving fittings. *The secret of labor-saving is to be found in the elimination of the need for work* rather than in the provision of so-called labor-saving devices; for, indeed, many of these appliances create more work than they save. A proper equipment of shelves and cupboards *in their right places* may save considerably more work than an expensive fitting, and the same applies to the position of sink, drainer and cooking stove.

\*\*\*\*\*In all the houses visited, much more comfort and convenience might have been secured for the same amount of money, had there been a more intimate knowledge on the part of the architects, builders and housing committees of the manner of life of the prospective tenants, and the duties of the home organizer. The combination grate is a case in point; generally it is used merely as a sitting-room grate, but costs about three times as much as the ordinary type to buy and fix. Shelves are another example; there are never enough, yet as many as could possibly be needed would cost less than the unwanted dresser in the living-room.

Modern systems of motion study and costing have shown the immense importance of placing centres of activity, such as the sink or cooking stove in their right relation to one another. It need cost no more in money to place doors, shelves, sinks, etc., aright—all that is needed is knowledge and forethought.\*\*\*\*\*

With regard to convenience, attention to detail is sadly lacking in the new houses. Doors, for instance, are often in awkward positions; the place where the gas supply pipe enters the house frequently settles the position of the gas cooker, regardless of comfort or convenience; shelves in the scullery are almost invariably too high, and are seldom near enough to the sink to be convenient for putting pans and crockery away, while the slot meter is usually placed upon the highest.

Regarding comfort, some means of warming the scullery other than the gas cooker would be a great advantage, and would also be useful for airing and drying clothes.

Storage room is deficient in the new houses. A good storeroom is badly needed, but a larger larder with no separate storage place for perishable food is a mistake. Butter, milk, and other perishable articles of diet are not improved by being kept in the same place with a miscellaneous collection of spare crockery, empty bottles and jam pots, grocery stores and anything else for which no other place can be found.

## MANAGEMENT

One of the most important aspects of the housing problem and one which has been too greatly neglected in the past is the problem of management.

Mr. Edgar L. Chappell of the Welsh Housing and Development Association at Cardiff, Wales, has recently published a most valuable and helpful document in the form of a pamphlet of 16 pages entitled "The Management of House Property".

In this pamphlet he considers such topics as:

Aims of House Management; Conditions of Success; Management Departments; Duties of House Managers; Resident Officials; Selection of Officials; Selection of Tenants; Referencing of Applicants; Tenancy Agreements; Tenancy Regulations; Tenancy Records; Methods of Rent Collection; Rent Arrears; Premiums and Bonuses; Payment of Taxes; Methods of Supervision; Repairs.

Appended to the pamphlet will be found a Specimen Form of Application for Tenants and Model Tenancy Regulations.

Every person contemplating the development of an industrial housing enterprise in the United States and every person now managing such enterprises will find it profitable to obtain a copy of this most helpful document. It can be obtained at the price of 6d. from the Welsh Housing & Development Association, 38 Charles Street, Cardiff, Wales.

## WHY WORKINGMEN'S HOUSES CANNOT BE BUILT TODAY

An interesting illustration of the reasons why houses are not being built today for workingmen to occupy is contained in a statement made recently by Mr. Henry Vivian of London in connection with a competition recently held for the building of 90 flats to be built at Hampstead Garden Suburb.

Mr. Vivian pointed out that it now costs more merely to transport a brick to the building site than it would have done to manufacture the brick before the war, and that the number of bricks laid per man today has fallen far below the pre-war level. He added, with wages having increased all around in the building trade, amongst railway employees and in other highly organized trades, the provision of cheap houses for the working population has become almost impossible.

## IMAGINATION IN TOWN PLANNING

Professor S. D. Adshead, the well known British Town Planning authority, delivered some time ago before the British Town Planning Institute an address on the subject of "Imagination in Town Planning" which contains so much that is of value to students of town planning throughout the world that we are reprinting here extracts from it, our only regret being that limitations of space do not permit us to reprint it in full. He said in part:

At the outset of our undertakings we must use the innate imagination of simple ordinary men. We must not be architects thinking merely of architectural facades. We must not be engineers thinking in water-tight compartments of transport, sewage schemes, and roads; we must not be landscape artists thinking everything depends upon visual treatments, natural gradients, or the preservation of beautiful belts of trees; nor must we be economists, sociologists, valuers or surveyors, confining attention entirely to efficiency and cost.

Town Planners must, in the first place, be ordinary men, and not so well educated as to have lost all imagination



and the originality of children. Specialized attainment must at the outset be laid on one side—that is what I mean by “Imagination in Town Planning.”\*\*\*\*\*

The great problem I refer to is the problem of distribution. Are we to develop our towns on the lines of a great separation of classes; is there always to be an East end and a West end? Are we, as some would advocate, to stop developing our big towns altogether? Are we to surround them with suburbs that are appendages rather than enlargements, and small towns that are self-dependent, or each of which specializes in one great regional effort.\*\*\*\*\*

Liverpool has set aside three areas, each designed to provide sites for 2,000 practically similar houses intended to be occupied by 10,000 practically similar people.

Now, how can 10,000 people living in practically the same type of house, more or less the same type of street, and occupied in practically the same daily routine, expect to enjoy all that interest and variety of surrounding which a normal environment can offer. I think myself that no class that is entirely separated from other classes—as must necessarily be the tenants in these large schemes—should in the best interests of citizenship, exceed in population that number which can, at any rate, have a nodding acquaintance with one another; otherwise there is bound to be that monotony which characterized so much town development during the nineteenth century.\*\*\*\*\*

I doubt very much if the importance of making the housing areas of the people interesting places to live in, seriously concerns the higher officials of the Ministry to-day.\*\*\*\*\*

What then are some of the features lacking in our biggest housing areas which would supplement and complete existence and make the communal life of the people at least as interesting as was the life of a Saxon villager, or a kaffir in his kraal.

In the first place, I think that not more than, say 500 houses of one class and accommodation should be placed in juxtaposition.

I think that in controlling the development of areas as working class suburbs or satellite towns more sites should

be left vacant for public buildings, and other kind of accommodation, such as the future new conditions may require. There should be more open spaces, not only for recreation, but to give a more generous appearance to the whole organization of the scheme.

Only with such a development can we really talk about ornamentation and decoration.

If in such a lay-out there is a river or an existing avenue of old trees, we can talk about a promenade, and we can talk about seats and kiosks for a local band. If there are properly prepared sites for public buildings, we can come to consider forecourts, stepped approaches, banks and balustrades.

If there is ample width of grass border, we can talk about planting trees.

My point is that decoration and lay-out go hand in hand.

It may be argued that the equipment of the housing area with all these amenities means great expense. My reply is, that this a short-sighted view, and even at that, that in reality it is not so. Your open spaces need not be what we call "laid out". It only means the bare cost of the land.

In an area I have recently had something to do with at Lemington-on-Tyne, it was arranged for there to be set on one side some 5 acres of open land. I suppose it cost about £ 750, or an addition of, say 1½d. a week in rent to each house. I consider that the privilege of living on the border of what is veritably a small common, is well worth this trifling expense, which may be said to approximate to the value of a thimble-full of beer, and this can easily be wiped out, or mopped up, by, if necessary, charging a rent for the many interesting purposes for which it could quite properly be let.

## INTERNATIONAL CITIES AND TOWN PLANNING EXHIBITION AT GOTHENBURG

American travelers in Europe this summer who are interested in Housing and Town Planning will find it well worth while to make the trip to Sweden and attend the International Cities and Town Planning Exhibition that is to be held at

Gothenburg this summer commemorating the 300th Anniversary of the founding of that city.

Those who wish to go direct to Sweden will find a steamer leaving New York on July 20th in S/S "Stavangerfjord" for Bergen and can proceed from there by rail to Gothenburg. The following itinerary has been suggested by Albert Lilienberg, the Chairman of the Local Committee of this Town Planning Exhibition.

- July 20th: Leave New York by Norwegian S/S "Stavangerfjord" for Bergen.
- 29th)
- " 30th): Arrive Bergen.
- " 31st: Leave for Christiania in the morning by "The Norske Fjaeldline" 8.10 a. m. and arrival at Christiania 9.45 p. m.
- August 1st: Visit to places and buildings of interest in Christiania and neighbourhood.
- " 2nd: Leave for Gothenburg in the morning 7.30 a. m. and arrive at Gothenburg 3.08 p. m.
- August 3-6: Conference and International Town Planning Exhibition at Gothenburg. Delegates of conference are invited by the City of Gothenburg to a banquet and free motor cars for town planning excursions.
- August 7th: Leave for Stockholm in the morning (Bergslagsbanan) 8.50 a. m. and arrive in the evening 9.23 p. m. at Stockholm.
- 8th: Visit at Stockholm and surroundings. (City of
- " 9th: Stockholm will invite the delegates of the conference to a lunch and free motor cars for town planning excursions.)
- " 10th: Depart by train from Stockholm in the morning 9.55 a. m. and arrive at Copenhagen 12.23 next night.
- " 11th: Visit at Copenhagen.

The steamer fares range from \$187.50 to \$250., depending on the number of persons in the cabin. It is suggested that those making the trip will find it advantageous to make reservation of hotel accommodations in Bergen and Christiania by wireless from the steamer. Those wishing reservations made at Gothenburg should telegraph to Mr. Lilienberg.

## “VILLAGE SARAH BERNHARDT”

*La Renaissance des Cités*, a French organization devoted to reconstruction work, is sponsor for the plan to build a “Village Sarah Bernhardt”, in honor of the great actress. Unlike previous efforts of this society, the new development will not be in the Devastated Regions, nor will it be intended to shelter workingmen, in the ordinary sense.

“Destined to provide homes for intellectual workers,” says M. Pierre Sardou, architect for the village, “its success requires that it be located near Paris, in an easily accessible suburb. By intellectual workers is meant artists, writers, sculptors, teachers and the like”.

The plan is to gather together the future occupants in to some sort of co-operative or mutual-aid society, and to build houses of varied type, as economically as possible, under the supervision of a trained architect. *La Renaissance des Cités* is to retain control, and plans to carry on a public campaign for funds. By means of benefits, lectures and gifts it hopes to be able to give the fortunate inhabitants healthful homes surrounded by pleasant gardens, with hot and cold water, central heating and electricity. It believes that society in general will greatly benefit by this provision for this class of workers, whose artistic and literary products are, in a sense, the property of all.

Contributions to this cause, it is believed, will be of immense value to intellectual workers, who, so often, in the beginning of their careers, at least, and sometimes all their lives, are forced to live in badly ventilated, shabby and uninspiring quarters. The “Village Sarah Bernhardt” is not planned as a retreat for the indigent, but rather to provide active workers with a means to enjoy proper family life and to do their work amid conditions of calm and independence, although dependent on a limited income. Its beauty and charm ought to make it an example of the best things of which the race is capable.

Among those identified with this movement, in addition to the officers of *La Renaissance des Cités* are M. Georges Risler, President of the *Musée Social*, M. Louis Bonnier, Architect, and Technical Inspector for the Department of the Seine, *La Société*



*des Artistes Français, La Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts*, and numerous other well known individuals and societies.

## A FAIR RENT SCHEME FOR PARIS

Lucien Lheureux, in the *Paris Journal* proposes a solution of the Rent Profiteering problem, based on the principle that the actual value of apartment houses built before the war has not really increased since 1917, but only *appears* to have done so, and will again drop when times are normal. He proposes a method of computing a fair rent for present conditions, as follows:

- (a) 1/5 of rent—for expenses of upkeep  
This part may be doubled over 1914 to allow for increase.
- (b) 4/5 of the balance—interest on capital  
To be increased so as to yield 7¾% instead of 5%.
- (c) 1/5 of the balance for depreciation and repairs  
This may now be tripled.

In this manner, a building yielding 1000 francs gross in 1914 should now yield 1872 francs and all rents might reasonably be increased in that proportion. Variations of this plan are given to provide for a number of special cases. For new houses a different method is proposed which would give much higher rents. It is suggested that strangers coming to live in France be forced by law to rent only new houses built since the war. He adds to this, complete tax exemption on new houses, as well as personal property tax exemption for the tenants. These exemptions he claims will cost less than the present method of loaning government money at low rates of interest; or housing a few of the poor at the expense of the tax payers.

The idea is to fix by law the various coefficients by which rents and interest rates of 1914 should be multiplied to give legal rent-rates—such laws to be varied year by year to fit conditions, over a total of five years. All present leases are to remain as they are in every detail, except the amount of the rent.

## LANDLORDS WHO BAR CHILDREN PENALIZED

The Chamber of Deputies, discussing rent laws recently voted an amendment which should bring relief to many unfortunate tenants. France, and especially Paris, like New York, has been

a difficult place for tenants with large families—or even with small ones—to find lodging. Many house owners simply refuse to allow children in apartments, going so far as to insist on a clause in the lease whereby the arrival of a baby entails cancellation.

The legislators, by an overwhelming majority, decided that henceforth house owners or their agents who refuse to rent premises to families with children, or who make children a pretext for raising the rent, shall be liable to fines varying from 500 to 5,000 francs.

## SANITATION VERSUS BEAUTY

Referring to an old law of the city of Paris providing for an annual competition between newly completed structures based on the appearance of their façades, M. Roéland, a member of the Municipal Council, proposed an interesting variation of this at a recent meeting of that body.

After making full acknowledgment of the value of such efforts to produce a more beautiful city, he said:

But these competitions would have unfortunate results indeed, if they ended by simply hiding unhealthful lodgings behind impressive façades, in decorating richly rooms not fit to live in, or throwing dust in the eyes of the passerby.

I should like to see every home healthful, agreeable to live in and pleasing to the eye—but this last characteristic is, to my mind, of secondary importance.

M. Roéland then quotes impressive figures concerning the immense numbers of dwellings classified as distinctly unhealthful in the City of Paris. The more recent ones give 17 groups of “insanitary” dwellings embracing 4,290 buildings occupied by 186,000 persons. In the last 25 years, 33,069 deaths from tuberculosis have occurred in these groups, according to statistics provided by the Bureau of Sanitation.

In a group of 118 houses, classed in 1918-1920 as “tuberculosis centers” were found 150 insufficiently lighted rooms, of which 23 could not be improved upon by reasonable alterations. These, with 19 other inhabited rooms improperly planned as to light, air or cubical content—also impossible to improve—made 42 rooms which the examiners requested to be listed as unfit for human occupation. A special group of 2524 homes whose occu-

pants were sick at the time showed only 51% of rooms receiving enough sunshine, and over 27% receiving none whatever.

Speaking of the cost to the city of removing these slum areas, M. Roéland estimated the net loss to the city at about one billion francs. He added:

If the rules of hygiene—rules which are, after all, nothing but rules of common sense—had always been followed in building these houses we would not now be facing this expense. Many lives would have been saved, as well. The past is past; our predecessors lacked foresight, we will have to pay for their errors.

But let us, for the future, avoid such mistakes. Do the present laws protect us against them? I am afraid they don't. I do not intend to analyse here in detail the laws of Paris on this subject, but I cannot refrain from pointing out one or two unsavory details.

For example, in Article 22 we find: 'The minimum of direct view (i. e. distance to opposing wall) from rooms intended for habitation opening on private ways is 6 metres (19 feet 6 inches)'. This, of course, means a space between buildings of 20 feet, and that many rooms would never receive sunlight, although at the risk of a stiff neck the inhabitant of the ground floor could catch a glimpse of blue sky at the opening of the well in which he is buried.

Article 23 is still more astonishing: 'In all new houses, for courts lighting habitable rooms and kitchens, both surface and direct view requirements must be fulfilled. The direct view should be at least 2 metres (6 feet 6 inches) for kitchens, and 4 metres (13 feet) for habitable rooms.' The adjective "habitable" is admirable indeed, for a room whose horizon is limited to 13 feet!

After some further remarks tending to show that present laws do not suffice to produce healthful homes, M. Roéland proposed an annual competition between the architects and owners of homes built during the year in the City of Paris. This competition would have to do with the general hygienic qualities of the building, and the healthfulness and convenience of the individual apartments, including those of the care-takers.

The 6 prize-winning houses, according to this plan, would be exempt from one half of the local improvement taxes, and the architect of each would receive 3000 francs. The jury would be composed of various officials and hygienists of note, 10 in all, of whom two would be chosen by the competitors.

Such a series of prizes, would no doubt have considerable educational value. But it seems to the observer from this side of the Atlantic that the very first essential, if conditions are as represented by M. Roéland, is to so amend the regulations with

regard to new construction as to make such things as he complains of impossible in future.

## THE CITY OF THE FUTURE

*La Renaissance des Cités* recently held a most interesting Conference at their offices in Paris on the subject of "The City of the Future", under the joint auspices of their own organization and the French Regional Planning Federation. On this occasion a talk was given on the Planning of a Great City by M. Maurice Sergent.

### CO-OPERATIVE APARTMENTS IN PARIS

E. A. MacDougall, President of the Queensboro Corporation, which owns and manages a group of co-operative apartment houses in the Borough of Queens, recently returned from a trip abroad in which he gave close attention to housing conditions in Europe.

In returning to this country a few weeks ago Mr. MacDougall reported the success of the Paris co-operative houses. He said:

A most interesting operation consists of a large group of Franco-American apartments erected and managed by the Society of Co-operative Enterprises under the direction of Charles Sée from plans of M. Aristide Daniel, architect.

The Society of Co-operative Enterprises has constructed in Paris various groups of buildings composed of apartments of all sizes, co-operatively owned, which form of ownership is provided for under the French laws.

Four groups of buildings containing in all 1,000 apartments have been commenced by the Society; each purchaser of an apartment pays one-half of the price, the other half being secured by a mortgage payable in 15 to 30 years and bearing interest at the rate of 7% per annum.

The Society at the present time is negotiating with the City of Paris for the construction, on fortification land, of groups of buildings to contain approximately 2,000 apartments; the city of Paris will be expected to guarantee the income of these buildings.

The Franco-American group of buildings, as at present constituted, consists of 1,564 separate apartments on 3 sites, comprising 24,151 meters of ground. It is the intention of the society to proceed later on with the erection of several



new groups of buildings to contain approximately 1,000 apartments, ranging from the simplest to the most luxurious, with general co-operative service.

### WHOLESALE BUYING CUTS COSTS

The new co-operative buildings in Paris have been planned by architects, engineers and master mechanics. The operations are being financed by private interests and the houses are thoroughly French in style and build, but undeniably American in comfort and are so advertised by the French company. This combination of rare good taste and comfort represents the application of modern building methods long the vogue in America, but still in the infancy of their development in France. As a result of the adoption of American efficiency methods, the new co-operative houses in France are being produced at a considerably reduced cost of construction, while the apartments are being sold at lower prices than would have been possible under old methods.

The Society of Co-operative Enterprises by co-operative building, co-operative service and wholesale buying have succeeded in effecting the following saving in the living expenses of tenant owners: 25% in food, 30% in beverages, 35% in combustibles, 30% in laundry and 30% in domestic help.

In short, the society has succeeded in solving the housing, domestic help and high-cost-of-living problems of the people of Paris.

From statements recently published in a Paris newspaper, the apartments in the first group of buildings now in course of construction, will be sold at a price of from 30,000 to 87,000 francs, one-half to be paid down at the time of purchase and the balance in installments. In the second group of buildings, which it is expected will be finished within the year, the apartments will sell at from 10,000 to 40,000 francs per apartment, one-quarter of the purchase price to be paid down and the balance to be paid in installments over a period of from 15 to 30 years.

Each of these buildings is to be furnished with central heating, elevator service, social halls, restaurants and co-operative stores. In selling the apartments preference will be given to employees of the Government, especially teachers, and also to

persons with large families.

Pamphlets describing this enterprise can be obtained from *Groupe de L'Habitation Franco-Americaine*, 61, Avenue Victor-Emmanuel-III, at a price of 2 francs each. The corporation carrying on this enterprise is incorporated with a capital of 3,150,000 francs and comprises a group of 60 important contractors who have ample means of carrying out their undertaking.

From figures recently published in this country it appears that a total of 487 co-operative societies and limited companies were operating in France in 1922 for the construction of moderate priced dwellings.

These organizations have a capital of 99,349,000 francs and in most cases made net profits permitting payment of 4% dividends (as of 1921).

Financial statements submitted to the French Government during 1922, by these various enterprises gave their standing as follows according to figures received by the Bankers Trust Company, of New York, from its French Information Service:

	Limited Companies.	Co-op. Societies.	Building Ass'ns.
Capital .....	51,777,000	32,488,000	15,084,000
Loans obtained.....	28,073,000	13,665,000	49,791,000
Real est., imp. & unimp.....	78,607,000	27,682,000	.....
Loans granted.....	2,282,000	537,000	41,177,000
Legal reserves.....	350,000	299,000	83,000
Other reserves.....	1,537,000	918,000	451,000

In addition to the above private undertakings the Government has a federation of 106 official organizations which gives attention to administrative and technical phases of the movement to provide dwellings at moderate cost.

## THE GARDEN SUBURBS OF LYONS AND RHEIMS

Mrs. Edith Elmer Wood, an acute and intelligent student of housing problems, having recently returned from several months spent in Europe in which she studied housing conditions has put the results of her observations into a new book soon to be published.

In an article in the *American City* magazine for March, Mrs. Wood describes quite fully the interesting Garden Suburb de-

velopments at Lyons and Rheims, illustrating her article with photographs and plans. A similar article published in the *Architectural Record* for February summarizes Mrs. Wood's impressions of the housing situation in Great Britain, France, Italy and Holland. All students of housing will await the advent of Mrs. Wood's new book with the greatest interest.

## BELGIUM'S RECOVERY

Belgium has recovered from the devastation of war with remarkable speed. If the present rate of progress is kept up, it is estimated that by the end of the year the Devastated Regions of that country will have resumed almost their pre-war aspect, insofar as housing accommodations are concerned. Nearly 75,000 private dwellings out of a total of 100,000 destroyed or damaged have thus far been built, and most of them are occupied by their former inhabitants. The reconstruction of private houses has been carried on at an expense of 685 million francs.

What a really extraordinary undertaking this has been, can be realized only when one recalls the difficulties of the situation. First of all, the battlefields had to be cleared of shells and other war impedimenta. The ground had to be leveled, roads rebuilt and depots constructed for the storage or destruction of munitions gathered in the battlefields; the laborers necessary for this work had to be lodged in houses built as temporary accommodations to deal with this emergency.

Even while this work of clearance was going on, temporary huts were run up for the former inhabitants who began to trickle back after the Armistice.

At the beginning of this work, as was to be expected, labor was scarce and materials even scarcer. There was not a railroad track left intact in the whole of the battle area. The work therefore necessarily had to be carried out by whatever means there was at hand, as the chief thing was to get houses built quickly.

The extent to which the towns in the Devastated Regions have been rebuilt and the population formerly living in them rehoused is well illustrated by the accompanying table. It should be realized, however, that many of the former inhabitants have settled permanently abroad and will never return; that others, attracted by high wages, have settled in the large towns of Belgium.

The following table shows the present population as contrasted

with the pre-war population and the number of private houses existing prior to the war, the number damaged and the number that have thus far been rebuilt in 19 of the leading towns of the West Flanders battle area:

Town	—Population—		Number of —Private Houses— Destroyed or		
	Prewar	Present	Prewar	Damaged	Rebuilt
Menin .....	18,353	18,175	3,790	2,897	2,748
Wervicq .....	10,408	9,549	2,200	2,017	1,919
Comines .....	7,030	6,609	1,700	1,700	1,549
Warneton .....	4,085	2,156	830	830	340
Bas Warneton..	822	698	194	194	119
Messines .....	1,404	908	333	333	278
Wytschaete .....	3,531	2,084	755	755	535
Ypres .....	19,497	12,122	3,780	3,780	2,488
Zonnebeke .....	4,245	3,157	843	843	565
Passchendaele...	4,030	3,051	900	900	489
Moorslede .....	7,616	5,320	1,500	1,450	1,410
Roulers .....	26,201	24,813	5,311	4,961	4,261
Staden .....	5,543	5,108	1,300	1,260	1,248
Handzaeme .....	3,250	2,952	685	610	404
Zarren .....	3,399	3,059	674	599	482
Dixmude .....	3,788	2,053	930	930	498
Pervyse .....	1,460	1,036	315	315	253
Ramscapelle ....	934	717	207	207	196
Nieuwport .....	4,622	4,246	951	951	606

All the above towns and villages were in the firing line. The inhabitants were evacuated almost to a man, so that, during the war, the population of civilians was negligible. It will be seen that all the houses in some towns were destroyed, and it is safe to say that not a single dwelling in any of these places escaped damage of some sort.

Close to Ypres are the Garden Villages of Kalfvaart and Ligy, on the Dixmude and Menin roads respectively. Kalfvaart comprises 100 cottages, Ligy, 140. The Ligy houses, of brick, were started in June, 1921, finished and most of them occupied by the following October. These houses, which cover a surface of 54 square meters each (approximately 65 square yards) comprise a large living room, washhouse or scullery, four bedrooms, a loft and cellar. They are somewhat larger than the general run of working class dwellings in Belgium. Two modern improvements strike the attention of the building man looking over these houses, the cistern of reinforced concrete and the ventilated walls, which are of double thickness.



Close to Roulers is the Garden Village called Batavia, the first experiment made in Belgium in this class of workmen's houses. Building was begun about Christmas, 1919, when the building trade was in a bad slump. One hundred houses were occupied and another hundred are under way to meet further demands for accommodation—which shows that this experiment filled a real post-war need. There is a similar group of 100 houses, built as a Garden Village, near the railway station at Dixmude.

Rural cottages in Flanders often were, before the war, ramshackle places, and sanitation was of the most elementary character. In many cases they were mere shelters against the elements, with no pretension to comfort. From a health point of view their destruction was no loss. The Garden Villages that have replaced them are far superior.

## A VISIT TO BELGIAN HOUSING SCHEMES

Two "study-trips", one in Belgium and the other in France have been organized by the *Union des Villes*, according to a recent issue of *Le Mouvement Communal*.

The French trip took place from the 6th to the 10th of July, and included visits to many interesting housing developments and *Cités-Jardins* at Lille, Lens, and in and around Paris, as well as the Nord Railway Company's village at Tergnier, near Rheims, recently described in these pages.

The Belgian trip is planned for the latter half of September, at which time it is hoped that many interesting projects now under way will have been completed. American students of housing who expect to be in Europe at that time and would like to include this trip in their itinerary should communicate at once with Senateur Emile Vinck, *Directeur, Union des Villes et Communes Belges*, 3 bis rue de la Regence, Brussels, Belgium.

## HOUSING SHORTAGE IN BELGIUM

The housing shortage is very keenly felt in Belgium, the overcrowding being specially bad in the large towns. In Brussels and Antwerp the situation is more serious than in Ghent and Liege, though the latter towns are also suffering acutely from the scarcity of accommodation. In Brussels, for instance, 784 families of from five to ten members occupy one room per family; 5,449 families occupy two rooms each; and 6,155 families occupy three

rooms each; while in Ghent the number of families of over five persons occupying one room is 72, and 815 families occupy two rooms, and 1,403 families occupy three rooms.

A great need for workmen's houses is felt in the industrial areas, notably at Courtrai in Flanders. Building has come to a standstill, owing to the high price of raw material and to the increase of wages, and the smallest houses are sold for 30,000 or 40,000 francs. To encourage workmen to build or buy their own houses, a bonus was offered by the State, in August, 1922, to the first 10,000 persons applying for it. On January 23 last, about 3,500 persons had applied for State aid, so that 6,500 bonuses are still available. According to the regulations issued, the bonus is in no case to exceed one-fifth of the purchasing price, and the applicant must be a Belgian, resident in Belgium since 1920. The amount varies according to the private income of the applicant.

It is reported that in order to give an impetus to building, the Belgian Government is granting loans to builders for twenty years at 2%, on condition that the rent charges do not exceed 4% of the total capital expended. Further, bonuses which may amount to 3,000 francs each, or about 5% of the total value of the house, were provided for the first 10,000 persons who would build or buy a house for their own use. Only small houses, fulfilling certain conditions, are covered by this scheme.

## A GARDEN VILLAGE OF 3,000 HOUSES

The Society, "*Le Foyer Bruxellois*," has just acquired the land necessary for the development of 3,000 houses surrounded by gardens. The land is at Nederover-Heembeek, recently incorporated by Brussels. Detached, as well as group houses, are contemplated for one and two families respectively. The plans are to be carried out during 1923.

## RENT RESTRICTION IN BELGIUM

A severe Rent Restriction Act has been in force in Belgium, which has just been amended by the Parliament in the following way:—

(1) Any tenant or sub-tenant has within the limits of the conditions set forth below the right to continue to occupy his present domicile, even if he has taken possession of the premises after the coming into force of the present law—

up to the same month in the year 1925. The lessor who, for this date or for a later date, desires to terminate the extended lease, must give six months' notice. From July 1, 1926, notice must be given according to common law.

(2) The privilege of extension is subject to the tenant's carrying out his obligations, including the regular payment of his rent and of any increase thereon, and arrears of rent due during the war, in conformity with agreements made. The judge may grant a delay to the tenant for the fulfillment of his obligations.

(3) The extension of the lease does not apply to the option to purchase.

(4) In the event of the tenant's death the privilege of extension of the lease extends to his wife or to those who have "lived with him" for at least six months, excluding employees and servants.

This Act does not apply to:

(1) A person occupying a villa or other house and only spending part of the year therein.

(2) A person occupying a building or part of a building exclusively for the carrying on of his business.

(3) A person occupying a building both as a residence and for the carrying on of business, for which the annual rental exceeded, on August 1, 1914, 5,000 francs in Brussels and towns of over 100,000 inhabitants, or varying rents down to 700 frs. in communes of less than 5,000 inhabitants.

The lessor may, counting from the coming into force of the Act and during its enforcement, increase the rental of any lease extended in virtue of the Act of August 14, 1920, or of the present Act, by any sum up to 100% of the rent fixed on August 1, 1914. The above maximum also applies to leases running at the time and to leases contracted after the enforcement of the Act, whether the premises be let furnished or unfurnished. No clause of a lease contrary to the provisions of the Act shall be effective unless they concern leases of which the yearly rental exceeded 1,500 frs. on August 1, 1914, and not terminating for three years after

the expiration of the enforcement of the present Act, and unless the said clauses have been approved by a justice of the peace at the request of the parties concerned.

## BELGIAN TYPES OF HOUSING

The National Society for Low-cost Dwellings of Belgium has recently issued the first part of an album of Typical House Plans, which it is believed will prove of service to builders and housing workers in that country.

The plans given have been chosen from among the simplest and most economical of those which have been actually constructed in various parts of the country. For each plan complete data—when and where built, by whom, the number built, the average cost, etc.—are given in French and Flemish.

Those interested may consult the February issue of *Le Mouvement Communal*, where two of them are reproduced. The volume itself may be obtained by communicating with the *Société Nationale des Habitations et Logements à Bon Marché*, 56 rue de Spa, Brussels, Belgium.

## A BENEVOLENT DESPOT ENDS RENT CONTROL

Contrasted with the difficulties which the Government in England is experiencing in trying to free itself from its Rent Control laws and the similar difficulties which New York is finding, it is refreshing to find that Italy has cut the Gordian knot. Mussolini, Italy's new benevolent despot, and who promises to be the savior of Italy, if one can at all foresee the future, has recently induced the Italian Parliament to repeal all of the emergency housing laws passed in wartime, thus abolishing all restriction of rents in Italy.

As in England during the war, laws were passed in Italy preventing landlords from raising the rents or evicting tenants for any reason and at the same time taxes were increased to such a degree that the landlord often ceased to be the real owner of his property, but merely administered it—as a rule at a very small profit and often at a loss—for the good of the community.

The effect of Rent Restriction laws in discouraging building of new houses—an effect that has been noted in all of the countries where rent restriction laws have been enacted—was quickly perceived by Mussolini who realized that these laws were accentuating evils they were meant to cure.



Notwithstanding the fact that he knew that the repeal of such laws would be most unpopular among millions of tenants, Mussolini did not hesitate, but with his usual courage and outspokenness and single-minded purpose for the welfare of Italy, unhesitatingly determined to end the Rent Restriction Acts.

At the same time he issued a warning to landlords advising them to act with moderation.

While the Rent Restriction laws in Italy end on July first of this year, tenants will not be left entirely without protection. As a safeguard against exorbitant demands by landlords an Arbitration Court is created consisting of 3 members, a landlord, a tenant and a legal referee which will decide any dispute where necessary. Such courts are to last for the next 3 years.

An interesting point in connection with this subject is that in Italy the landlords and tenants are getting together; and general agreements have already been arrived at in many cases as to increases of rent between unions of landlords on the one side and tenants' associations on the other.

At the time when the repeal of the Rent Restriction laws was pending in Parliament an attempt was made to foment agitation among the tenants and to stage meetings of protest against the Government. Such a meeting was scheduled to take place in Rome the latter part of January.

A week before the time set for this meeting Mussolini made a public announcement forbidding the holding of the meeting and issued an edict to the Chamber and Senate which was a remarkable example of plain speaking. In it he said:

Considering that the new housing laws contain plenty of guarantees for tenants; considering that almost all persons here in Italy, landlords and tenants, have reached agreements by direct, friendly negotiations; considering that in Rome also such friendly negotiations are about to bear good fruit; considering that the meeting which has been called for January 28 has been rendered unnecessary by the above mentioned negotiations; considering that one of the promoters of the meeting is a certain Signor Francesco Visco, a Deputy by profession, who has always showed hostility to the present Government; considering that another promoter is a certain Signor Francesco Zandardi, a Deputy by profession, who is certainly one of the moral accomplices of the horrible murders at the Palazzo d'Accursio in Bologna; considering that

a third promoter is a certain Signor Ezio Riboldi, a Deputy by profession, who by his whole-hearted support of Communist theories has evidently accepted citizenship of a nation whose Government has declared war against Facismo; considering all these things, this meeting of January 28 is forbidden.

I intrust the head of the Roman police with the duty of seeing that the present order is carried out.

Some of us have always wished for the advent of a benevolent despot. Mussolini continues to make us regret, at times, that we have not a Mussolini in the United States.

One interesting outcome of the high rents and the housing shortage in Italy, is reported in a dispatch from Rome to the effect that, owing to these facts, hundreds of people have been driven from the cities and taken up their abodes in caves in the hillside near the *Porto del Popolo* and under the fashionable *Borghese Gardens*. It is stated that these cliff dwellings are much like the majority of Roman apartments—cold, damp and unlighted—though they have the advantage of having better ventilation.

Persons who have travelled through Italy and France know that for many years large numbers of people have made their homes in such caves, hollowed in the hills.

## HOUSING IN SPAIN

The Institute of Social Reforms at Madrid has recently issued a number of pamphlets in Spanish on the housing problem. One of these is entitled "What Is a Low-Priced House"? and discusses such questions as the Definition of a Low-Priced House, One-Family Dwellings, Multiple Dwellings and Lodging Houses, Group Houses, Conditions Which the Low-Priced Houses Must Fulfill &c.

Another pamphlet discusses the subject of "Assistance from the State in the Construction of Low-Priced Houses", and deals with such questions as Exemption from Taxation, Government Loans, Guarantee of Rent, Subsidy &c.

A third pamphlet deals with the "Functions of Municipal Governments in the Housing Problem", and discusses Town Planning, the Grouping of Houses, Platting, Zoning, Streets, Drainage, Water Supply, Sunlight and numerous other questions.

While a fourth pamphlet deals with the International Conference on Garden Cities & Town Planning held in London in 1922 and reports that Conference in considerable detail. From which it is quite evident that Spain is keeping step with the other progressive countries of Europe in its understanding and grasp of the allied problems of Housing and Town Planning.

## STATE HOUSING LOANS IN DENMARK \*

Denmark on December 23, 1922, enacted a new law governing loans for building purposes whereby financial assistance in the construction of houses is provided for until December 31, 1924.

Under the laws effective from September, 1920, to May, 1922, about 22,000,000 kroner (\$5,896,000, par) was appropriated for state aid, with an equal municipal grant, and a state loan of approximately 25,000,000 kroner (\$6,700,000, par), but it eventually became impossible both for the State and the municipalities to continue the large cash grants. However, public aid was considered necessary because of the expected decrease in the present high building costs (the index number being about 175 late in 1922 as against 100 in 1914), as buildings put up without public aid would be unable to compete in rental rates with those erected later. Furthermore, it was felt that a cessation in building activities would be disastrous because of the housing shortage in Copenhagen and the larger municipalities, aside from the unfortunate effect on the unemployment problem.

Under the new law the policy of joint contributions by the State and municipality for meeting the extraordinary housing needs is continued, but direct state and municipal grants are not made.

One of the main provisions of the law is that second mortgage loans may be made from the state housing fund for the construction of dwellings. The loan draws 5% interest annually and is payable like an annuity in the course of about 36 years, payments on interest and principal amounting to 6% annually. In addition a small payment amounting to about one-fifth of 1% annually is made toward a reserve and amortization fund. The first and second mortgage loans together

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\* From U. S. Labor Review.

may not exceed 85%—in exceptional cases 90%—of the cost. The builder is required to furnish the remaining 15%. The government loan must not amount to more than 40% of the total estimated cost of the building.

A loan is granted only when the municipality concerned gives security for one-half the amount of the loan. An exception is made where dwellings are to be occupied by tenants from some other municipality.

Ready money is provided by the issuance of 5% State bonds through the Mortgage Bank of the Kingdom of Denmark which are sold in the open market by the borrower.

The State Housing Fund and the technical adviser under the Ministry of the Interior decide who shall receive loans. The total sum to be loaned by the State is determined semiannually by the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Finance, and the Parliamentary Committee on Finance. Whether the building project receives a state loan depends upon the reasonableness of the estimated cost, its technical advantages or disadvantages, its rentability, and the housing need in the community. The use of Danish material to as large an extent as possible is required. While such buildings will be subject to some control as to house rents and giving notice, the State in order to encourage building does not claim part of the profits in any eventual sale at a gain.

The State Loan Fund must give its approval before a new owner can take over a loan but it is assumed that consent will be given unless special reasons make it inadvisable.

The State may make special arrangements when required with regard to an extension of time or remission of interest or payments.

Aid may be granted regardless of whether the builder is a building association, a municipality, or a private person. A board of 10 members, on which the building trades employers and workers, the municipalities, and associated building and loan societies are represented, will be appointed by the Minister of the Interior to see that the estimated building costs are kept within reasonable limits.



## HOW RATIONING OF HOUSES WORKS IN BERLIN

Housing conditions are so difficult in Berlin that comparatively few families are able to retain an entire house, or even an entire apartment for themselves. Every section of the city has its Housing Committee, which makes constant inspections and checks up the space in all buildings.

Consequently persons having houses larger than the size of their family justifies under the housing regulations are always seeking lodgers. In case the householder does not find his own lodgers, persons will be sent by the Housing Committees.

Under the present financial stringency in Germany tenants who will pay well, especially if they will pay in foreign currency, are not unwelcome in many palatial homes.

But the ability of foreigners to acquire accommodations of a superior class has caused much criticism among Germans, and members of the Housing Committees are constantly under fire. While some persons apparently rent entire apartments, according to an official of one Housing Committee, they have in fact permission to rent only one or more rooms. But by paying the holders of leases well it has been possible to induce them to go for fixed periods to watering-places where living costs are low, thus leaving the entire house or apartment at the disposal of the sub-lessee for a limited time.

Large houses are being divided up in every possible way to meet with the housing regulations and guarantee privacy to the tenants. Apartments in better buildings in Berlin are so large that it is seldom possible for a family to retain a whole apartment. Consequently there are two families cooking in many kitchens, and the comic papers are full of jokes about the complications arising from the housing regulations.

As illustrative of this situation, recent reports from Dresden indicate that as recently as last March the scarcity of houses in that city was so great, that there were then pending with the city officials 27,259 applications for allotments of lodgings, with little prospect of vacancies being found.

Because of this situation that city has adopted regulations limiting the number of rooms which one family may occupy.

Occupants of apartments are accorded one room more than the number of persons in the respective family, including subtenants, and counting two children under 14 years of age as one person. All remaining rooms are subject to compulsory billeting. The scarcity of apartments is so keen that at present dwellings are allotted to married couples only if they have more than two children. The unfortunate result is that in some instances two, even three, young couples, each having two or three children, occupy the same crowded apartments with their parents.

In Berlin it is reported that the overcrowding is very great. Last March there were pending in that city 201,555 applications for living quarters. These were persons who had special claim on lodgings. No foreigners were included and the applicants were all married people and either local residents or those from other parts of Germany who wished to settle in Berlin.

In addition to the rationing of housing accommodations, the Reichstag on March 12th, last, passed a law establishing a tax on housing, taxing the houses at 30 times their pre-war rent. The proceeds of the returns from this tax are to go into a special fund which is to be used for the building of new houses.

Under this law a workingman who was earning, say  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million marks a year and paid rent before the war at the rate of 400 marks a year will now have to pay 12,000 marks as annual tax.

One-half of this new tax is to be levied by the state government and one-half by the municipality which is empowered to impose an additional tax for especially choice lodgings.

In addition to this law, a special committee of the Reichstag has made a number of other recommendations to meet the housing shortage. These include cheaper building materials, the appointment of a special official for the control of the building material industry, special privileges for coöperative companies in the purchase of building materials, reductions in freight charges on such materials and a special law to facilitate the building of workingmen's dwellings in new factory and mining districts.

## COMPULSORY HOME BUILDING

To encourage building, a local ordinance has been enacted in the city of Hue, Germany, which requires every person who builds a factory, hotel or office building to build at his own expense one cubic metre of dwelling house for each 20 cubic metres of the volume of such other buildings. He is permitted however, if he prefers, to give cash to the city for building homes, to the amount of two-thirds the cost of such a building, instead of building the houses himself.

## PAYING FOR HOMES BY LABOR INSTEAD OF MONEY

Vienna home owners are now paying for their houses in hours instead of money, under an agreement with the Land Settlement Societies, which permit the erection of a home on land loaned by the Societies and paid for in from 1,500 to 2,000 hours of labor in 3 years.

The law that was passed at the beginning of the war to prevent the raising of rents may have spared Vienna riots, but is said to have ruined the landlords, many of whom are now receiving only a few cents a month for their property.

In consequence, buildings are in bad condition and landlords are unable to make repairs. A landlord may not sell his property without a payment to the city of 55% of the sale price.

Growing out of the housing shortage is the movement of the Land Settlement Societies, financed by funds from America and England, which has brought together 700,000 homeless of the middle and working classes throughout Austria. These settlers are building Garden Villages by co-operative labor, which is aiding to a very measurable degree the problem of Austria's homeless families.

They are using the most convenient building material, which is concrete. Women are working alongside of the men, the men digging the sand, the women sifting it; all hands join together in laying the walls and foundations.

The concrete block used cannot, of course, compare with the high quality of concrete block used in home construction in America, although it is evidently of a fair quality, as evidenced by photographs of finished houses.

Most of the property made available by the Land Settlement Societies contains sufficient sand for the concrete used in the house. This is very fortunate, as it allows the settlers a house of masonry construction which is dry, warm, and permanent, eliminating the many unpleasant features that are present in houses of frame construction, which the landlords cannot afford to repair.

## MARRY OR MOVE

A dispatch from Vienna states that the slogan of the newly appointed Commission to Relieve the Housing Crisis is "Marry or move."

All bachelors with apartments have been informed by agents of the Commission that there are only enough apartments for married people. One bachelor appealed to the Supreme Court, which upheld the decision of the Commission and ordered the man to move in 15 days if he was not married then.

## IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

A few weeks ago the Czecho-Slovak Parliament passed 3 important measures dealing with the housing problem. One of these, known as the Rent Payers' Protection Bill, was intended to cure the defects of the existing Rent Restriction laws and permits landlords to raise rents and deals with other defects found in those statutes.

"The Rentpayers' Protection Bill," said Deputy Langer, National Socialist, in introducing it, "is in the circumstances of today, an absolute necessity, owing to the amount of profiteering carried on by certain unscrupulous tenants at the expense of under-tenants, and landlords are given the power to apply to Court and have such tenants evicted. Paragraph 6. of the new enactment gives the heirs of a deceased tenant a right to continue the tenancy."

A most important provision is contained in Paragraph 10. where landlords are empowered to raise rents by 120%, compared with 1914, in cases where the tenant's assessed income exceeds Kc. 60.000 per annum, or, in the case of companies, Kc. 250.000. An important change is made in Paragraph 3. of the existing law which deals with sums paid for repairs and improvements to houses.



The new measure provides that a landlord shall not now, as heretofore, be taxed on such sums, but, on the other hand, may not demand that the tenant shall refund him these sums. In houses provided with elevators, the landlord may demand an increased rental for the use of the elevator only from those tenants who actually use the elevator.

The local authorities in towns and districts are charged with the duty of making known from what date and to what extent increases of rent are allowed by the law in their particular jurisdictions.

Deputy Binovec, Social Democrat, speaking on the special measures essential to meet the shortage of houses, said that not only in the large towns but also in country districts there was a lack of accommodation, notwithstanding that numbers of houses and flats were offered to be let—but at impossible prices. It was impossible for the Government to look on quietly at such a state of affairs and therefore authorities had, under the new measure, been empowered to dispose of such houses and rooms if, within 14 days, they were not let by the owner.

Deputy Dubicky, Agrarian, introducing a measure under which evictions can be postponed, said that the Government did not propose to put off eviction indefinitely, but only on two, or, by way of exception, on three occasions, according to decision of the local courts.

The three measures thus passed through the House of Deputies represent a considerable improvement on the existing provisions which come to an end in a few weeks. They are a compromise arrived at between Socialists and the bourgeois parties and are an attempt on the one hand to protect the tenant from ruinous demands on the part of the landlord; while on the other hand they permit landlords to make reasonable increases in certain cases. An ideal state of affairs would of course be represented by perfect freedom in housing matters, a state of things to which Czechoslovakia is by degrees approaching. The measures in question are a link in the chain of carefully deliberated steps towards this end.

In view of the fact that in Prague and other towns throughout Czechoslovakia comparatively little has been done to meet the demand for housing accommodation for State or other public employees and that only a limited number of such persons are in a position to avail themselves of the facilities offered by the exist-

ing Housing Act, the Minister of Public Works has decided recently to erect dwellings for some 10.000 such employees, the cost to be met by the State. The Cabinet have approved of 600 million crowns worth of housing bonds being set aside for this purpose and the proceeds devoted to the above scheme.

The Ministry of Public Works will organise the sale of the bonds as follows:

1. In all towns or communities where the authorities purchase Housing bonds through the Ministry of Public Works, dwelling-houses will be built at once for the whole amount of funds accruing.
2. The contracts for erecting the houses will be given, other things being equal, to such builders, etc., as have purchased housing bonds through the Ministry of Public Works.
3. Housing bonds will be sold to State or other public employees to be paid for by instalments, the holder at once enjoying the right to win the premium which may accrue to such bond in the annual prize-drawing.

As soon as any particular branch of State or public employees shall have thus acquired the proper proportion of bonds, a corresponding degree of housing accommodation will be reserved for them.

## A RAILROAD STRIKE TO PREVENT RENT DECONTROL

Recent dispatches from Budapest report that Hungarian railway men have threatened retaliatory measures, including the isolation of offending cities if the proposal to repeal the Rent Restriction laws is carried out.

In a circular letter the leader of the Hungarian state railroad men, who is also director of the state railways, gives an outline for action and says that those cities in which landlords have evicted state officials will be the first to feel the effects of the retaliation.

Trains will be run as usual but they will not stop at stations of cities upon the list to be punished. On telegraphic order from the union the ticket offices will be closed. The circular also states that all those cities where the law is not repealed will receive excellent service.

The matter has aroused tremendous excitement in the Hungarian Parliament. The circular letter of the railroad men

was read to members in the corridors and was considered by representatives of all parties as a most revolutionary action. In the meantime several landlords, in anticipation of the repeal of the law, have already increased rents and evicted persons who refused to pay.

In Hungary as in many other of the defeated European countries, rents are regulated by the State and are kept far below the usual index of prices. Wages of state officials, and especially of railway men, are exceptionally low in Hungary, so that in case the repeal is effected, these classes of wage earners will be most severely damaged by the consequent rapid increase in the cost of living.

## TOWN PLANNING IN JERUSALEM

Not only have the tombs of the Pharaohs not been free recently from the invasion of modern influences, but the ancient Holy City of Jerusalem has recently been subjected to the scrutiny and study of a modern Town Planner with the result that a new Jerusalem, not the one mentioned in the Bible, but one more in keeping with modern ideas of sanitation than the old Jerusalem, is soon to be an accomplished fact.

Professor Patrick Geddes of Edinburgh, one of the pioneer students of Town Planning of present times has recently been studying Jerusalem's Town Plan and replanning this ancient city. Wide roads are to be built through the city and a new Garden Suburb is to be developed on both sides of this road, where students, scientists and professors will reside. Much attention is being paid to the rebuilding and sanitary improvement of the old city. Parks are being considered and a better supply of housing is said to be desirable in the Moslem portion. A new Town Planning ordinance was approved a few years ago.

## RENT RESTRICTION IN INDIA

Even far away India has felt the necessity of Rent Restriction legislation. There, a Rent Restriction bill, known as the Simla House and Rent Bill, was introduced in the Simla legislative body some months ago. The object of the bill is to regulate temporarily the rents and occupancy of houses in

Simla and to assist minor officials of the Government to house themselves during the transition period which it is hoped will come to a natural end when the previous Rent Restriction Act passed in 1918 expires.

One clause of the bill provides for the regulation of house rents and permits a maximum increase of  $33\frac{1}{3}\%$  on the rents actually levied in the year 1917. Another clause forbids suits for the ejectment of government employees without the previous sanction of the House Accommodation Committee, a government body appointed under the Act.

## HOUSING IN FORMOSA

The United States consul at Taihoku, Japan, under date of January 4, 1923, includes in his monthly résumé data concerning Government loans for housing purposes in the island of Formosa (Taiwan). To help solve the housing problem, the Government offers loans at  $6\frac{1}{2}\%$  to individuals or associations wishing to buy or build for housing purposes. A sum of 800,000 yen (\$398,800, par) is set aside for this use.

Applications for the loans must be made at city or prefectural offices in the island and are thence transmitted to the government officials in Japan. Here they are investigated and approved or rejected. Those which are approved are sent to the Bank of Taiwan (Ltd.), in Taihoku, which is the local agent for the Industrial Bank of Japan, and through this the loans are made. They must not exceed 60% of the appraised value of the security offered, whether this be land or building, and are to be repaid within 20 years by annual installments.

Preference is given to the smaller applicants who desire to build homes for themselves. Loans will be made to building associations, provided at least one-third of their capital is paid up before their application.

The purpose of the Government in making these loans at such exceptionally low interest is to utilize for the benefit of the inhabitants of Taiwan money deposited in post offices in Taiwan. Each year the Government arranges with the treasury authorities in Tokyo concerning an allotment of the "low interest funds" to Taiwan. For this allotment the Industrial Bank of Japan issues bonds, which are bought by the Treasury Department of Tokyo.



## NO HOUSING SHORTAGE IN HONOLULU

Honolulu's housing shortage has become a thing of the past, according to statistics at the office of Louis S. Cain, city and county building inspector.

In 1910 the average number of persons per house was 5.8. By the end of 1921 this figure had been reduced to 5.1. The last year showed a still greater decrease.

The gradual decrease is due probably to four causes, Cain says, the first and most important being the elimination of the tenement congestion in the city. The second, Andrew's exemption bill, gives tax exemption to the house owners. The third is the general campaign that has been carried on under the "own your own home" slogan. The fourth cause is the increasing popularity of individual cottages.

## THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

The situation in the building industry grows worse rather than better so far as the building of workingmen's dwellings is concerned. In New York City the recent bricklayers' strike has resulted in a complete victory for the men with an agreement by the contractors to a minimum wage of \$12 a day for 2 years and with all kinds of bonuses undoubtedly to prevail.

As was expected, encouraged by the victory of the bricklayers, the workers in other trades are now making similar demands. What the end of this "snowballing" practice will be no one can foresee.

A recent bulletin issued by the National Industrial Conference Board states that the present cost of housing is the highest it has ever been and is 72% over the cost of 1914; and the cost of building labor is 112% higher than the 1914 cost.

According to the U. S. Department of Commerce, the aggregate cost of the materials needed in the erection of a 6-room brick house is now 114% above 1913, and building costs are higher than at any time in the last 2 years, having advanced approximately 22% in the last 12 months. Approximately two thirds of all present construction activity is for residential building. Rents are still at the peak, no decline having been observed from the high levels of 1919 and 1920.

The Mason Builders' Association speaking of the situation a short time ago in a formal statement said:

Practically no responsible builder can make an estimate of the cost of a building at this time, as he does not know what the mechanics will produce or what they will charge for their services from week to week—much less through the life of a contract; nor can he secure stable or reasonable prices for materials or for parts of the work that are subcontracted.

It is estimated that the increased cost to the public in New York City alone of these recent wage increases in the next 6 months will amount to the astounding sum of \$20,000,000.

That this situation is not limited to New York City but is observable throughout the country is evidenced by the situation in St. Louis where plasterers who have been receiving \$12 a day have recently demanded an increase to \$14.

### THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

From the workingmen's point of view these increases are attributed to the increased cost of living. But an unprejudiced observer cannot help wondering to what extent the "*cost of high living*" is an element in the situation. The Secretary of the former Building Trades Council in New York commenting on wage increases of the last 20 years said recently:

Twenty-two years ago when I was earning \$3.50 as a tile layer I lived as well as I can live today when tile layers are paid \$10 and a bonus. A good suit now costs between \$60 and \$80 and 22 years ago a fine suit *made to order* cost \$25. Other commodities have gone up in proportion.

Is it really necessary for tile-layers to have suits made to order at a cost of \$80?

### THE VALUE OF LABOR

Far be it from us to attempt to determine what labor should receive or what relation the wages of labor should have to the cost of living. This is a question, however, that must be settled

soon if the building of workingmen's dwellings is ever to be resumed in this country by private enterprise. A forceful illustration of relative values has been afforded recently by U. S. Senator Royal S. Copeland of New York, who made some striking comparisons between wages in the building trades today and the price the farmer receives for his products, quoting a Virginia farmer who has translated the cost of labor engaged in the building industry into food values at the farm. The following examples were furnished.

It takes  $63\frac{1}{2}$  dozen, or 762 eggs, to pay a plasterer for one day of 8 hours' work.

It takes  $17\frac{1}{2}$  bushels of corn, or a year's receipts from half an acre, to pay a bricklayer one day.

It takes 23 chickens weighing 3 pounds each to pay a painter for one day's work in New York.

It takes 42 pounds of butter, or the output from 14 cows, fed and milked for 24 hours, to pay a plumber \$14 a day.

It takes a hog weighing 175 pounds, representing eight months' feeding and care, to pay a carpenter for one day's work.

This statement of relative values must give every thoughtful student of our social and economic conditions concern for the future of the country.

Insofar as it relates to the building of workmen's dwellings, it must be quite evident to every student of the question that unless this tendency of the workingman to profiteer and to charge all the traffic will bear is checked, we shall undoubtedly face in this country an overwhelming demand for the building of workingmen's dwellings by Government and for subsidized housing.

## THE HOUSING SHORTAGE

That the housing shortage still continues is evidenced by the replies to a questionnaire sent out recently by the National Association of Real Estate Boards to 475 local real estate boards throughout the United States and Canada.

Two hundred and twenty-five returns were had to this inquiry. The replies as to the existence of a housing shortage were answered in the affirmative in 61% of the cities; 27% of the cities reported no shortage, and in 12% the shortage was not considered acute.

On the question of over-building 94% of the cities reported that there was no over-building. Only 2% considered their cities over-built and 4% thought there was a tendency apparent toward over-building.

With regard to construction activity 74% reported an increase over last year; 20% a decrease; and 6% reported practically identical conditions.

As to rent increases, rents were reported on the increase in 53% of the cities; 11% reported a downward trend to rents and 36% reported rents as stationary.

Similar interesting information was returned with regard to the market conditions for sale of residential property and business property, the condition of the labor market, the availability of mortgage money, the rate of interest for such money and whether there was a tendency toward suburban development.

It is of interest to note that 63% of the cities reported a heavy movement toward the suburbs; these included nearly all of the larger cities. 30% saw no suburban movement while 7% reported a slight tendency in that direction. In view of the statements made by Babson reported elsewhere in this issue this confirmatory evidence is most interesting.

All students of the housing situation and of the construction industry will find it advantageous to obtain a copy of this most interesting Report which is excellently illustrated by a series of effective and simple diagrams. Copies of the Report can be obtained from the Executive Secretary of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, 1414 Consumers' Building, Chicago.

## THE RENT SITUATION

We commented in our last issue on the dangers inherent in the effort to have the State control rents and interfere with the operation of economic law and cited the fact that New York State, as had been anticipated, had extended the rent laws for a further period and has also extended their application from the City of New York to a number of upstate cities.

In addition to this extension of the operation of these laws and without any investigation as to the continuance of the "emergency" which justified their original enactment and which led the courts to sustain legislation of this kind, the New York legislature has taken a further step and extended the protection of the rent laws to all leases made after September, 1920 as well as to



leases entered into before that date.

Governor Smith at a hearing on this bill remarked:

The police power of the state cannot be invoked forever to permit tenants virtually to fix their rents. I started a lot of this by recommending emergency rent laws, but it can be carried so far that the good will be destroyed.

It is significant that notwithstanding Governor Smith's recognition of the dangers inherent in this situation, he was led by the pressure of public sentiment to sign the bill in question, which the property owners of New York City have announced they will contest in the courts as unjustifiable and illegal, owing to the fact that no emergency existed which would warrant the enactment of such legislation. The outcome of this case in the courts will be watched with much interest.

As illustrative of the effect of such laws in teaching the public to rely upon legislative action as a substitute for the operations of ordinary economic law, it is of interest to note that in the session of the New York legislature which has recently closed there were introduced at that session 34 different bills dealing with the subject of rent control in some form or other, of which only 3, fortunately, became laws.

## FRUIT TREES ON HOUSING SITES

It has always been a source of surprise that in developing housing schemes there has not been greater use made of the opportunity of planting fruit trees, not of course in our large centers of population, but in suburban and semi-urban districts. Not only do such trees greatly benefit the site but they have a very practical value in the annual yield of fruit, thus materially reducing the cost of living.

The City of Leeds, England has recently determined to plant trees on all its new housing estates and several members of the Leeds Corporation are strongly in favor of planting fruit trees in the streets, particularly apple trees. They point out that this practice has been in vogue in Germany for some years past and that none of the apples grown in this way are stolen in that country but are gathered and sold by the municipality.

One member of the Leeds City Council in advocating this plan said that he believed that in a short time a communal spirit would be developed so that no fruit would be stolen.

It will be interesting to see how this plan works out in a country like England.

## HOME OWNERSHIP

Recent publications of the U. S. Census Bureau at Washington indicate that home ownership in the United States has increased very slightly in the last 10 years.

Viewing the country as a whole, it appears that home ownership increased from 38.4% in 1910 to 40.9% in 1920. Of the 40.9% owned homes, 24.7% are owned free of debt and 16.2% are mortgaged. This is a very notable change from the facts as they existed 30 years ago, in 1890, when 36.9% homes were owned, of which 26.5% were owned free and 10.2% were encumbered. A recent article in *Institute News*, published by the Institute for Research in Land Economics and Public Utilities of which Dr. Richard T. Ely of Madison is the leading spirit, discussing this question presents two interesting tables showing the ownership of homes in cities having a population of over 300,000 in 1920, and a similar table showing the average value, debt and ratio of debt to value of the mortgaged homes in the same cities with the average rate of interest paid.

Commenting on the situation it says:

There is a downward trend of home ownership in the larger cities and the ratio of debt to value is advancing slightly. While there appears to be no immediate cause for alarm, the problem is of great national and social import and deserves more detailed and critical study than has been given the subject thus far.

## MODIFIED TAX EXEMPTION

In our last issue we discussed the New York tax exemption situation. The New York City Board of Aldermen has recently adopted a new tax exemption ordinance extending the operation of the Tax Exemption Law for another year, so that new dwellings commenced prior to April first, 1924, may benefit by the ordinance.

The scheme now adopted, however, differs in a number of important respects from the tax exemption ordinance which has been in effect since 1921, chiefly through its limitation to one-family and two-family dwellings, with a few apartment houses

securing some benefit from the ordinance. Under the new ordinance one-family houses erected prior to April first, next, will enjoy an exemption from taxation of \$1,000 per room and not exceeding a total exemption of \$5,000; and two-family houses a similar exemption of \$1,000 per room and not exceeding \$10,000.

In the past, large apartment houses enjoyed an exemption of \$5,000 an apartment no matter how many apartments the house contained. Thus, a 20-family house enjoyed an exemption of \$100,000.

Under the new ordinance all such multiple dwellings are limited to a maximum exemption of not exceeding \$15,000, regardless of the number of rooms contained or the number of families housed.

In signing this ordinance Mayor Hylan had the following to say:

There may be a diminution of some of the immediate profits which the big realty speculators enjoyed under the prior over-generous tax exemption ordinance. However, nothing concrete has been advanced indicating that there will be any diminution of new construction if the proposed ordinance becomes operative. High rents have been exacted without justification by such speculators in the past with a generous municipal subsidy in operation. With the withdrawal of a portion of that subsidy there is no reason to think that the leopard will change his spots.

It is generally conceded that the principal object of tax exemption was and is to assist the average citizen of moderate means to own a home to properly house his family, the thought being that not only would this prove beneficial to the immediate family circle affected, swelling the ranks of the small home owners, of whom there can never be too many in a growing city, but also alleviate in a measurable degree the housing shortage. That object has been conserved in the ordinance just enacted.

Tax exemption was not designed to provide a perennial harvest for large realty speculators. These speculators have enjoyed exemptions on multi-family houses often exceeding a quarter of a million dollars a year. The commendable desire to speed the construction of apartment houses and to create a healthy competition among owners which would accrue to the advantage of tenants in the form of reasonable rentals, has been the compelling reason for these generous exemptions.

But the beneficent purposes sought to be accomplished in granting such exemptions have not altogether been realized. The generosity of the city has not been passed along to the tenants as a general rule, although isolated cases of such generosity may have been recorded. It is an open secret that rent profiteering among a grasping minority is still with us; and to this fact the many thousands

of cases handled by the Mayor's committee on rent profiteering bear strong evidence.

Moreover, a definite limitation of exemption in the case of the buildings above referred to should prove of decided benefit to the taxpayers at large. Many millions of dollars will now be saved for the people which, under the prior tax ordinance, were swallowed up by the realty speculators. This money will now be used to help lessen the burden on the other property owners who do not share the benefits of the tax exemption ordinance.

What this city needs is more homes of the one and two-family type. The tax exemption ordinance is intended to continue the stimulus given to such construction.

It will be of very great interest to students of government to see how the new ordinance operates; and to observe whether it is possible through schemes of taxation to control the channels into which investment monies shall flow.

Will the new ordinance result in the stimulation of the building of one-family and two-family houses, or will it have the effect of checking building construction as a whole? The future will determine.

## STANDARDIZING WOODEN MOULDINGS

We are only just beginning to realize how many things of comparatively small importance in themselves have tended in the past to increase the cost of a home. The high cost of building materials and building labor have put under the spotlight every item that goes into the construction of a home, and even so comparatively small a part of the house as the wooden mouldings used as finish to the trim of the room are found to play an important part in increasing the cost of construction.

A valuable service has been rendered recently in the Report rendered by the American Institute of Architects and the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association who have been making a study for some time past of the various mouldings used in a house, with the purpose of standardizing these so far as practicable, and at the same time preserving their architectural quality.

A new Standard Moulding Book, the Southern Pine Association at New Orleans announces, is now ready for distribution. In the former Standard Moulding Book there were approximately 900 different patterns, but in the new book this



number has been reduced to 149. The old designs of mouldings were often criticized from the standpoint both of excessive number and lack of artistic form. The new patterns are pronounced artistically satisfactory by the architects, the lines and forms of the mouldings having been changed so as to carry out the purpose for which mouldings are designed, viz. to create light and shade.

## SOUND ABSORBING PLASTER

That the average architect has little knowledge of the principles which govern sound transmission, or of the general science of acoustics, is the theme of a most valuable article in the *American Architect-Architectural Review* of April 11, 1923, by Arthur L. Foley of the Waterman Institute for Research of Indiana University, at Bloomington, Indiana.

In this article Mr. Foley points out that the average architect not only knows little of the science of building acoustics, but is quite indifferent to the whole question. He thinks that this indifference is due to a skepticism as to the existence of a real science of architectural acoustics. Mr. Foley adds that this skepticism is not strange, because of the fact that when most of these men took their college degrees there was no such science nor even the semblance of such a thing.

Not until the research work of Professor Wallace Clement Sabine of Harvard University, followed by a series of papers, first published in 1898 and continued until his death in 1919, had this subject been taken from the domain of guesswork and elevated to the plane of a real science.

Mr. Foley says:

If there is an architect, a builder, anywhere who doubts the deductions of architectural acoustics and who thinks that the acoustics of a room are largely a matter of chance and largely independent of the materials of construction (and there must be many such since no attention is given to these matters in making their plans and specifications), he has but to visit the Riverbank Acoustic Laboratory at Geneva, Illinois. He need not study curves and data, witness experiments or perform any himself; he needs no apparatus.

All he needs to do is to enter a room, speak a word or two, pass into an adjoining room, and speak the words again.

These two adjoining rooms are in a concrete building of modern fireproof construction. The rooms are of exactly the same size and shape, both have painted cement floors, windows and doors of the same number and size in the same relative position with respect to one another, the doors being of steel. In fact the rooms are identical in every respect save one. The side walls and ceiling of one of the rooms are plastered with unfibred gypsum plaster applied to six-inch hollow clay tile, with what is known as a "lime putty finish." The other room is plastered with a scratch coat of ordinary gypsum plaster, over which is a coat of sound absorbing plaster about one-half inch thick.

The difference in the acoustics of the two rooms is so pronounced as to be startling. No one in passing through these rooms for any purpose whatever could possibly fail to notice the difference. The difference in the sound of one's footsteps would surely attract one's attention, even if no other sound were made. In the one room the reverberation is very pronounced; in the other the sound is quite "dead". Conversation is rather difficult in the former, and music in it would be anything but pleasing.

Mr. Foley points out in his paper that the important element in this question is the question of wave reflection from floor, walls and ceilings thus causing variations of sound intensity and reverberations.

It is evident that the houses of the future, if the architects of the future profit by this valuable scientific research, should be free from many of the inconveniences and defects that have prevailed so long in the houses of the past.

## A SUCCESSFUL HOUSING ENTERPRISE

### THE CINCINNATI MODEL HOMES COMPANY

The Cincinnati Model Homes Company, founded by the late Jacob G. Schmidlapp, has recently completed its 7th year of existence. The results achieved through this effort are not only

of interest to all students of improved housing but should prove of the very greatest value in encouraging other communities to undertake similar efforts along similar lines.

On the financial side the results have been quite satisfactory. After having borne all expenses, paid for a few improvements and met the full depreciation charges, the enterprise has met its usual obligation to the stockholders and also added a few thousand dollars to its surplus. Receipts for the year 1922 total \$76,836. Full occupancy and good collections—though with some effort in the colored groups—made that result possible. The losses from bad debts were but \$86 during the year among the colored group, which is attributed largely to the result of industrial conditions in 1921.

Interesting facts are given as to the cost of maintenance and repairs to the property per family, which has been \$21—the same as in 1921—a figure which has remained constant since 1918. In view of the fact that the buildings have passed their first youth, their average life now being over 7 years, this is a very encouraging situation.

An analysis of the company's disbursements for the year show that of each dollar disbursed 37.4 cents went for taxes (excluding income tax), 24 cents for maintenance and repairs, 21 cents for overhead charges, 10.4 cents for water and 7.2 cents for the running of the Gordon Hotel, a hotel for colored men.

The turn-over in the population of the company's various houses has been on the decrease; 39 families moved in 1922 as against 64 in 1921, that is 10% of the total tenancy as compared with 16% the previous year. Of those moving, 10 families moved on account of purchasing their own homes, 7 families were requested to vacate and 7 families left the city.

An interesting statement is made by the company showing the occupations in which the various tenants are engaged classified as skilled, non-skilled, professional and clerical groups, both among the white and colored tenants. Among the white tenants 48% are classified as skilled mechanics, whereas among the negroes only 9% are skilled workers, as was to be expected.

Commenting on the character of the tenancy it is pointed out that the conduct record of the negro groups continues to retain its high standard. Only 4 arrests of colored persons living in the company's buildings occurred in 1922 and these were all of a minor character, bringing up the total to 28 arrests during 7 years, or 1 arrest for every 150 individuals which outshines not

only the negro record of Cincinnati—which was 1 arrest for every 7 negroes—but also the white record which was 1 arrest for every 15 white inhabitants. The health record is equally encouraging; 10 deaths occurred in the same groups in 1922 bringing up the total number to 51 for 7 years, or slightly over 12 per thousand of population.

The record thus achieved by the Cincinnati Model Homes Company is indeed an enviable one and points clearly to the very great benefit redounding to the community through the formation of a company like this, wisely planned and intelligently managed.

## SOUNDPROOF ROOMS

One of the chief social objections to multiple dwellings, even to the highgrade apartment house of our large cities, has been the lack of privacy due to the transmission of sound from floor to floor and from apartment to apartment. Methods by which these defects can be overcome have therefore considerable interest for persons interested in the improvement of housing conditions.

Some recent experiments in this field carried on by the Western Electric Company in the Bell Telephone Laboratories in New York in order to develop soundproof telephone booths are of especial interest. To shut out the vibrations which would be transmitted by the floor, the rooms are built on foundations of 3 alternating layers of one-inch thick special all-wool felt and sheet iron. It is said that the results achieved have been highly successful and that when first entering one of these booths a person accustomed to the city noises has the sensation of almost suffocating stillness such as might be experienced in the depths of the woods on the stillest of nights.

## THE COST OF CHILDREN

Out of the West has come a new idea by which landlords may establish a sliding scale for children, determining the rent to be charged upon the basis of the number of children in the family rather than upon the accommodations furnished.

Not long ago one of the St. Louis papers carried the following advertisement:

FLAT—4 rooms, gas, electric, bath, hot water: shades:  
\$35: 2 children \$37, 3 \$38, 4 \$39, 5 \$40. Lindell 4993



When interviewed as to the reasons for this rather extraordinary departure from the accepted practice, the landlord said that while he has no objection to children he wanted to see how many people in St. Louis would pay for a place for their children to live. He said that he figured that children damaged property about \$1 a month each and that his suggested scale therefore is quite fair and equitable in covering the depreciation of the property. Incidentally, he added that he had had 138 replies to his advertisement and that he had not only rented the flat in question for \$38 to a couple with 3 children but had also obtained tenants, all adults, for 3 others. He was careful to point out that he was not discriminating against children. As he said to the interviewer: "Don't get me wrong. I'm for children, God bless 'em. But they ought to be worth \$1 apiece, don't you think?"

## MUST WORKING PEOPLE LIVE IN FRAYED-OUT HOUSES?

Is it an essential feature of our civilization that the majority of working people should live in dingy, second-hand, out-at-the-elbow houses? We don't any longer expect them to eat broken fragments of other people's food, or to wear cast-off clothing. But we do—in America—expect the rank and file of wage earners to be born, live and die in shabby, depressing, hand-me-down houses.

The speculative builder does not put up new houses for them, because there is no profit in it. The professional lender does not advance them money to build their houses for the same reason. But by cutting out the item of profit, putting houses on a public utility basis, like city water, it was possible, in Europe, before the war, to supply good houses, at cost, to the working classes, and it will soon be possible again, without the aid of subsidies. Western and Central Europe are committed to the policy of supplying a real house for every family. We are 30 years behind them in the theory and practice of housing.

What I want to suggest is a very small thing—only one step in advance, but so practical and so obviously just, that there ought not to be any difference of opinion about it—the utilization of Postal Savings deposits for housing loans to working people.

It is their own money—their own savings. The Government pays them a munificent 2% on it, and deposits it with banks, which pay the Government  $2\frac{1}{4}\%$ . Then the banks lend it out at 6 or 8%. Why shouldn't the Government lend it, instead, to workingmen who want to build themselves new homes—at the same low interest rate that it pays? And give them 25 years in which to repay the principal, as they do in Belgium; or 36, as they do in New Zealand? It would open the joy and benefit of a new home, all their own, to tens of thousands of families who cannot hope for it now.

Ours is almost the only civilized government in the world which does nothing practical to facilitate home-ownership. In Belgium upwards of 83,000 working class families have acquired homes through loans at a low rate of interest from the General Savings Bank. In New Zealand a workingman walks into the nearest post office and fills out an application for a housing loan with as little fuss as he would fill out a money order. About one tenth of the population own homes built through this means. It is not by accident that New Zealand has the lowest death rate and the lowest infant mortality rate in the world—hardly more than one half of ours.

Are we too old to learn?

EDITH ELMER WOOD  
Cape May Court House, N. J.

## ARE OUR CITIES DOOMED?

Clients who want suburban real estate should buy at once. A big change is coming about in the real estate market. During the past decade or more people have been crowding to the cities. Now, however, a reverse movement to the country is beginning which promises to be the greatest shifting in population since the institution of the railroad. Within the next ten or more years the building of suburban homes should rival the growth of the automobile, good roads, the movies, the phonograph or radio.

In fact, these inventions make possible the suburban movement. A few years ago country homes were limited to the rich or to those employed in the country, because only such people could afford means of transportation. Now automobiles have come within reach of the great middle class of

people. They are increasing at the rate of more than a million a year. Ten years ago there were one million passenger automobiles in the United States. Today there are about ten million, which is an average of one car to about every 10 people. They are bringing new and better roads and opening up millions of acres of hitherto inaccessible land. The more cars purchased, the more families there are who can have a suburban home, even though the breadwinner must work in the city. Wage earners during the last period of prosperity spent their money for motor cars; in the next period of prosperity they will buy country homes.

The motion picture has put the local town hall on a par with the city theatre. The motor truck is giving the rural or suburban dweller nearly the same freight and express facilities as has the city. Motor bus lines are covering routes which never could be served by trolley cars. Automobiles are bringing the schoolhouse and the village to within a few minutes of the country home. Chain stores are carrying to every community the same efficient merchandising as the city dweller enjoys. Last but not least radio, especially if developed on General Squire's wired basis, gives to suburban homes the finest city lectures and music.

The reason for suburban expansion, however, is not alone the attraction of a country home. In the cities congestion of dwelling house space and high rents have existed. Rebellion on the part of the rent payer is reaching the point of explosion. Almost any kind of a change would be attractive. Once the average city worker realizes that with a few hundred dollars and a flivver he can get a house of his own with all the land he needs, the chances are two to one he will move.

The city no longer has a wall around it. Railroads made the first breach, but the railroads opened up only narrow strips along their lines radiating from the city. In most cases the railroads followed the valley and lowlands, which are not the best building location. Between these lines are miles of land much more desirable for building but which have been inaccessible to the commuter because men had no means of getting to the train. It is in these areas between the railroad lines and within a radius of 15 or 20 miles of the cities, which the motor car and good roads have opened up, that the most spectacular development in new building should take place.

If you are interested in real estate the situation demands action. It means that if you want to buy desirable suburban land near any good city at present low prices, you will have to go about it at once. In selecting such property, a good plan usually is to follow out the best residential street and buy where land begins to sell by the acre instead of by the foot. On the other hand, if you own city dwelling house property which cannot be converted to business uses, the quicker you get rid of it the better. This does not apply to business buildings nor to property which will soon be in demand as the business section of the city expands. It does apply to other city dwelling houses for which such extravagant rents are now demanded. Remember that while the readjustment in industry is well along, the readjustment in real estate values has only begun. Moreover, the conditions above named indicate that the coming readjustment in real estate will be more like a revolution.

ROGER W. BABSON

## TEACHING HOUSING IN THE SCHOOLS

The public schools in Philadelphia, as supplementary to their work in civics, are displaying a large and comprehensive exhibit prepared for their use by the Philadelphia Housing Association.

A spectacular feature of this exhibit is the grouping of a collection of cartoons comprehensive in scope and covering varied phases of the housing and Zoning problems. For this material the Philadelphia Housing Association is indebted to local artists and cartoonists, including those attached to Philadelphia papers.

The effect of slum life upon the physical well-being of the school child is graphically depicted. Contrasts in size and weight of children in good and bad home areas are shown and readily carry the story of the heavy penalty of the slums to the observer. In like manner are depicted high death rates, stunted mental development, thwarted moral development, and hazards from ugly types of occupancy common to hidden courts and alleys; while large cartoons show the lurking dangers of unsewered streets and flooded cellars in the spread of respiratory diseases and fevers.

Pictorially, the hazard of the slums is shown in the absence of ventilation, sunlight and yard space in houses situated on dead-end streets, courts and blind alleys and in insanitary in-



terior conditions resulting from defective plumbing, building dilapidation and slovenly housekeeping.

By charts and graphs the data of numerous surveys is presented, showing the effects of 1922-construction upon the housing shortage; the tendency of Philadelphia to push the construction of houses for multiple occupancy farther than in other years; current rental conditions; and Philadelphia's home ownership.

The last section of the exhibit is devoted to practical remedies for consideration. These suggestions include a sewer programme that will cover every mile of built-up streets; the adoption and enforcement of adequate housing laws; adequate inspection service and funds for the abatement of violations; the promotion of the construction of low-priced homes; legislation to control rents; foresight in city planning; and, to properly direct the city's growth, the adoption of a Zoning law which will embody the plans that are at present being set forth by the Philadelphia Zoning Commission.

At the request of the Pedagogical Library of the Board of Education, the Philadelphia Housing Association is also making a permanent contribution to the public schools in Philadelphia in the form of a set of housing slides with explanatory readings for illustrated lecture purposes in civics classes. The exhibit and slides are supplementary to a very excellent text-book prepared by the Philadelphia schools for instruction in civics.

This collection of photographs, maps, charts, drawings and cartoons when first exhibited in February at the meeting of the Civics Conference received the approval of the teachers of civics, and each school represented desired to use the material in its class work. For each week until the end of the term the exhibit has been engaged by one of the public schools. Complete notes and descriptions for the teachers' use accompany the exhibit, and Housing Association speakers, placed at the service of the schools are addressing group meetings of the grades in explanation of the exhibit.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

## A BACKWARD COMMUNITY

### LOUISVILLE

Some thirteen years ago a number of citizens of Louisville, conscious of the serious housing evils which at that time ex-

isted in their city, prepared a tenement house law and after devoted labors secured its enactment by the state legislature. While this law—compared with present day standards—would not be considered as either progressive or modern, it was at that time a very creditable piece of legislation; though in many of its most important standards it was far below the standards of other tenement house laws, and in no sense adequate to deal with the very real evils which existed at that time in the city of Louisville. Its standards as to light and ventilation were quite inadequate and lower than similar standards in most of the other cities throughout the United States.

Its chief defect, however, was that it was solely a tenement house law and related only to tenement houses whereas the most serious housing evils in Louisville then, as today, were not to be found in tenement houses of which there were then comparatively few, but in the small dwellings, especially in the rows of 1- and 2-room dwellings occupied by the negro population.

Such as it was, however, this law did much in enabling the health authorities to deal with the older buildings and with improper conditions of occupancy.

After staying on the statute books for 10 years it was superseded by a state housing act in the year 1920, which was too literally copied after the Model Housing Law without adjusting it to local conditions. With the result that, after being unsuccessfully attacked in the courts, it was repealed by the legislature of 1922 without dissenting vote, in response to an agitation led by the organized real estate interests of Louisville, who, taking advantage of the housing shortage and the public concern over that situation, were able to carry their repeal bill through the legislature without any effective opposition.

The result of this action by the legislature was to leave the city of Louisville without any protective housing legislation.

Accordingly during the past year efforts have been on foot to secure the enactment of a local housing ordinance which would take the place of the law that had been repealed and which presumably would be "satisfactory" to those interests which had so strenuously objected to the state law.

A few months ago the new proposed Housing Ordinance was presented for public discussion and it developed that it contained many very objectionable provisions. This ordinance, with slight modifications, was signed by the Mayor on April 4th, last.

## THE WORST HOUSING LAW IN THE U. S.

The City of Louisville now enjoys the unenviable distinction of having the worst housing law enacted by any city in the United States in the past 10 years.

Neither the officials nor the citizens of Louisville can say that they were not warned. For, they have done what they have done with their eyes open.

In a letter sent to a representative of the Louisville Real Estate Board last December, Lawrence Veiller called attention to the defects of the proposed housing law in no uncertain terms. He said in part:

You apparently take umbrage at and challenge the statements made in our recent article in which we state that the proposed Louisville Ordinance is reactionary.

We propose to convince you and the citizens of Louisville that this is the case.

The chief purpose of all housing laws is to secure adequate light and ventilation in the homes of the people. Such laws also seek to secure adequate sanitation, fire protection and reasonable conveniences of living necessary to health and safety; but let us limit this discussion merely to the one broad question of adequate light and ventilation in the future homes of the citizens of Louisville.

In the face of the recognized knowledge of the effect that dark, unventilated rooms have upon health generally and upon the dread disease of tuberculosis, you and your associates are supporting and trying to justify a proposed law which will result in the building of houses in the city of Louisville in future in which there may be an unlimited number of rooms without adequate light or ventilation.

## INADEQUATE BACK-YARDS

Take the question of the size of the rear yard or the space between the backs of buildings. In most cities where there are housing laws a space of anywhere from 30 to 50 feet is required to be left unbuilt upon between the backs of buildings coming in from opposite streets. In the Housing Standards adopted by the Federal Government at Washing-

ton for the war housing projects of that government, it was stated that such space should be at least 50 feet. What is possible under the proposed Louisville ordinance? It will be entirely possible to build dwellings back to the rear lot line on each lot, solid, with no rear yards whatever but merely the public alley, for the ordinance imposes as its minimum requirement (Sec. 10) for rear yards the totally inadequate space of 15 feet for a 3-story dwelling house, which is about one-half of what it ought to be, but even this is made unnecessary by the provision that:

Where there is a public alley at the rear of the lot, upon which the lot abuts for its full width, the measurement for yard space may be decreased by the width of said alley measured between the property lines.

That means that if there is a public alley 20 feet wide, as there is apt to be, the 15-foot back yard can be decreased by 20 feet which would leave back yard of minus 5 feet, or none at all.

As if this weren't bad enough, even this minimum back yard of 15 feet is reduced down to the scandalous distance of a back yard of only 6 feet in depth, for all dwellings which are so arranged that the rear rooms are either water closets, bath rooms, kitchenettes, or supplementary windows of rooms which may have other windows on an inadequate and dark side yard.

Weighing my words carefully, I wish to say that there isn't a state or a city in the United States that has such a disgraceful standard of light and ventilation as this.

So much for the rear yard provision of the proposed ordinance. Let us now examine the provision as to side yards or space between adjacent dwellings.

It was the requirement of the housing law of 1920, for side yards 10 feet wide for three-story buildings, to which the real estate interests of Louisville took such exception and which was made the basis of the litigation sponsored by them in which it was sought to have that law declared unconstitutional and void.

### SIDE YARDS AS NARROW AS YOU PLEASE

What is now proposed? In the case of one-story dwellings to lower the side yard or space between adjacent



buildings to be anything the Building Department requires, that is, where the lot is less than 35 feet in width and has already been plotted.

There isn't a city or state in the United States that has such a shocking provision or that has ever thought of leaving so fundamental a requirement to the discretion of an enforcing official. We shall not dwell upon the unreasonableness of this proposed provision and the likelihood of the courts setting it aside as void on the ground of discrimination; that they will set it aside, if tested, we have no doubt; for it gives privileges to one property owner owning a lot 34 feet wide which are denied to another property owner owning an exactly identical lot.

Furthermore, under the proposed ordinance it will be possible to construct three-story dwellings occupied by three families in each, or even six families in each, or even twelve families in each, running back on the lot 60, 70 or 80 feet in depth, and with an exactly similar dwelling but 4 feet away from it, leaving the grossly inadequate distance of 4 feet between these two long and comparatively high dwellings, for the next to the last sentence of Sub-Division F of Section 11, expressly permits this.

### DARK ROOMS PERMITTED

Under the proposed ordinance it will be possible to construct in the guise of "alcoves", dwellings and tenements in the city of Louisville with innumerable dark and small rooms in them in which people will be forced to live. No uptodate housing law tolerates such a system for one moment. It will also be possible, in the guise of "alcoves", to permit the construction of new tenement houses and flats as well as private dwellings with small bedrooms in them not over 35 square feet in area and without any means of light and ventilation whatsoever, not opening to the outer air, little better than dark closets, and obtaining only such light as may come through an opening into an adjacent room (Sec. 22).

Finally, we come to the most serious of all questions involved in your law and in our recent article, namely, an attempt made in this ordinance as proposed in the

amendment of November 18th, evidently sponsored by your Board, to tie the hands of the health officials of the city and make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to carry out their duty in protecting the health of the citizens of Louisville by denying to the health officials and their subordinates the free right of entry into buildings in the city of Louisville at any reasonable time in the carrying out of the duties imposed upon them by law.

Prior to this "revision" of November 18th, we note that Sec. 94 of the proposed ordinance, did give such unimpeded and free right of entry, in this respect being similar to the provisions of the state housing act of 1920. A failure on the part of an owner or his agent or representative, or of a lessee or occupant of any dwelling to give such right of access to a health official would have constituted a violation of the act and subjected such person to all the penalties imposed by the act for its violation.

### THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S HANDS TIED

In place of this provision, due apparently to the efforts of the Louisville Real Estate Board, any owner or agent or occupant of a dwelling may refuse such entry to a health inspector, whereupon under the terms of the ordinance it becomes necessary for the legal machinery of the city to be started, to appeal to the Court for a search warrant to permit the health inspector to carry out his routine duties. Such a warrant must legally be served, in some cases such service sometimes takes months and even years.

It was this proposal that we had in mind when we said in our article that it was a "relic of the dark ages" and we repeat this statement. That is just what it is. There isn't a state in the United States in which there is a law in existence where the health inspectors of a great city are forbidden to make inspections of property in the course of their duty, and are forced to make application to the courts for a warrant with all the difficulties and delays that are involved in such legal process.

It is notorious that when a Board of Health starts in a campaign for general vaccination throughout a city in the

event of a smallpox scare that the tenants of the poorest dwellings in a city are prone to resist the efforts of the health officials and seek to bar them from their dwellings. We hesitate to predict what would happen in the city of Louisville in the event of a smallpox epidemic arising in future with such a provision of law upon the statute books.

### THE NEW LAW A MENACE

We repeat that the proposed Louisville Housing Ordinance as issued October 16th, and revised November 18th, 1922, represents the worst housing law in the United States and one that will work serious injury to the best interests of the citizens of Louisville.

We have no interest in this matter other than the interests of the city of Louisville and the desire to see all progressive communities throughout the country grapple with their housing evils and enact laws that will protect the health of their citizens and not injure their health. The proposed housing ordinance is a menace to the welfare of Louisville and should never be enacted into law.

Copies of these views were sent at that time to all of the leading papers in Louisville, to the Mayor, the Corporation Counsel, the Building Inspector and to the Health Officer.

It will be interesting to see whether all public spirit is dead in the city of Louisville and how long its citizens will be content to sit down supinely under such a situation.

### OCTAVIA HILL ASSOCIATION'S NEW SUPERINTENDENT

The Octavia Hill Association has recently elected Henry J. Baringer, Superintendent. Mr. Baringer for the past two years has served as architectural engineer of the Philadelphia Housing Association. Besides being a graduate architect of Syracuse University, he has had construction as well as architectural experience. While with the Philadelphia Housing Association, Mr. Baringer helped to develop the Philadelphia Building Congress, serving as Secretary during the organization period. Mr. Baringer began his new work the first

of June, and is now engaged in making a thorough study of the physical conditions of about \$1,000,000 worth of property owned or managed by the Octavia Hill Association.

## THE HAND OF POLITICS IN CALIFORNIA HOUSING

The California Commission of Immigration and Housing which has done such admirable work in the improvement of housing conditions in the state of California during the past decade, threatens to be disrupted through political manipulation.

Recently the Governor "ousted" one of the members of this Commission, Paul Scharrenberg, for "undue legislative activity," Mr. Scharrenberg's offense apparently having been that he had the temerity to urge the legislature to modify a pending housing measure in accordance with the Commission's desires but evidently in a way that was not agreeable to the state's chief executive.

They order these things differently evidently in the West. In the "effete East" they would certainly not tolerate for one moment such muzzling of public officials and such interference with free speech. The removal of a member of a State Commission because he has the temerity to express his views publicly on a public measure vitally affecting the Board of which he is a member, does not conform to our ideas of the "new freedom". One unfortunate result of this situation is the resignation of Edward Glass as Director of Housing of the California Commission of Immigration and Housing.

In submitting his resignation to the President of the Commission Mr. Glass had the following to say:

For reasons set forth herein I respectfully tender my resignation as Director of Housing for the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, to take effect as soon as possible. Recent events make it perfectly clear that building regulation will have no practical working place in Governor Richardson's policies. Apparently, there is no objection to the Commission of Immigration and Housing spending thousands of dollars in research work so long as these efforts remain merely academic. For example, the Commission has recently called together authorities from all over the State for the purpose of determining upon a code of building laws providing for safe and sanitary conditions. Governor Richardson, however, deems it highly objectionable to attempt to have such a code adopted as a State law. In fact he seems to think it an



especial act of impropriety to do this when it becomes necessary to lobby against a man whose housing bill was so overwhelmingly defeated by the voters in the recent anti-shingle referendum.

Mr. Scharrenberg failed to observe the nice discrimination between the academic and the practical aspect of our work and was therefore summarily removed from office.

To be sure, Governor Richardson is quite correct in his charge that Commissioner Scharrenberg "is attempting to make building more expensive" for certain individuals. Mr. Scharrenberg has made building "more expensive" for those who attempt to erect flimsily constructed wooden hotels six stories high with wooden fire escapes. A wooden structure of this character is now under construction. It rests upon an unsafe retaining wall not intended for the purpose of supporting such a structure. Yet to compel the owner to spend money to rectify such a condition is "burdensome".

That all the people who are housed in such type of buildings are unknowingly risking their lives is apparently no concern of Governor Richardson and any official who protests against such conditions must forthwith be removed from the service.

There are men and women, still in the service of the State Commission of Immigration and Housing, who will continue to make building burdensome for owners who violate the state laws. They will not remain, however, unless the Governor shall reverse his attitude by agreeing with men like Herbert Hoover and other leaders who have earnestly studied these questions along scientific lines. Economists, moralists, architects and others who have specialized on the subject agree that building and housing codes have a most potential effect on the growth of communities. In fact the consensus of opinion is unanimous among this class of experts that there can be no real advance in civilization until the great mass of the people are adequately housed.

I regret that it has become necessary to sever my connection with the Commission at such short notice. However, holding the removal of Commissioner Scharrenberg, for the reasons stated by the Governor, as absolutely indefensible I deem it my duty to resign promptly.

Mr. Glass has returned to the practice of architecture in San Francisco. A new Housing Act has been enacted but what will happen to the Commission on Immigration and Housing and how far it will be free to courageously enforce the Housing Law remains to be seen.

## TURNING ON THE SEARCHLIGHT

### THE HOUSING SITUATION IN CINCINNATI\*

We are able to present today some new information about our housing situation not hitherto known. In some respects it is not

possible to compare housing conditions here with those in other cities because we have been unable to ascertain from the large cities of the country the portion of their population that lives in tenement houses, whether their tenement population is growing larger or smaller, how many houses they are building today within the reach of people of moderate means. Fortunately our studies throw some light on these questions in our own city.

### WHO LIVES IN TENEMENTS?

We have not known hitherto how many of our people are tenement dwellers. The most careful estimates of people interested in the tenement problem indicated that we had probably 12,000 or 14,000 tenements. We know now by actual count that we have in Cincinnati 6587 tenements. More than 87% of these are in the "Basin" section as against only 13% in the suburbs. Apartment houses are not included in these figures. Our estimates of the number of people living in tenements were remarkably accurate. We had estimated 130,000. The facts now available show that the number is 120,000—about 30% of our total population.

Fortunately for the future of our city our tenements are decreasing. We know from the Building Department records that we have built no new tenements during the past 5 years. We also know that during the same period we have been getting rid of a considerable number of tenements. During the past year alone 225 tenement buildings were destroyed. There can be no question that we have today nearly 1000 fewer tenements than we had a decade ago.

### WHERE IS OUR "BASIN" POPULATION GOING?

This decrease in tenements is a most hopeful sign. It leads, however, to the question: What is happening to the people who are leaving the tenements? The answer to this question is revealed in our analysis of the trend of the population in the "Basin" section of the city where all of our worst housing is concentrated. Twenty years ago, in 1900, 166,000 people lived in the "Basin" sections of our city; 10 years later, in 1910, this number had decreased 7%, to 153,900; in 1920 it had decreased 16%

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*\* This remarkable study of Cincinnati's housing situation by Mr. Marquette should be copied in every city in America—(Editor).*

more, to 128,850—a decrease of 23% in 20 years. Our downtown population is drifting year by year to the suburbs. The “Basin” tenement is very slowly giving way to the smaller and more desirable suburban one and two-family house. Nothing could be more devoutly to be wished than that this trend should continue. If it does, 50 years hence downtown Cincinnati will house less than 50,000 people.

### THE UPWARD TREND OF TENEMENT RENTS

Tenement rentals have increased materially in the past 5 years. In 1918 we made a survey of 2000 tenement houses. It showed that tenement rentals ranged from \$1.75 to \$6.50 per room per month. Our resurvey of these same districts shows that today rents range from \$2.50 a room to \$12.50 a room. The average rent in 1918 was \$3.24 a room; in 1922—\$5.35 a room. Four years ago by actual count 10% of our tenement flats were vacant. Today practically no tenement flats fit for people to live in are vacant more than long enough for one family to move out while another is moving in. Some not fit to live in are occupied. The increase in rentals has been a hardship to tenement families, as it is extremely improbable that the income of this group—mostly unskilled laborers—has increased in proportion.

### WHAT ABOUT HOME OWNERSHIP?

Our tenements are decreasing and their occupants slowly moving to the suburbs. Meanwhile what is happening to home ownership? Is it increasing or decreasing? In 1920 about 30,000 families owned their own homes—28.7% of our families. We had hoped that with all the efforts that had been made for the past several years to encourage home ownership, our percentage would have been much higher. In comparison with other cities of between 250,000 and 500,000 population, we are not as high as we should be. Eight cities rank higher in the scale of home ownership than we, three cities fall below us. The highest of this group is Seattle with 46.3% of its families home owners; the lowest is Jersey City with but 20%. The average is 31%. Our large tenement population undoubtedly accounts for the fact that our percentage of home ownership is not as high as it should be. On the other hand we have real encouragement in the fact that while home ownership in the country as a whole,

decreased slightly in the past decade—Cincinnati increased its home ownership from 20.9% in 1900, to 23.2% in 1910, to 28.7% in 1920.

## THE HOUSING SHORTAGE

We are making some progress toward meeting our shortage of some 4500 houses brought about by the violent decrease in home building during the war years. Normally we would build between 1200 and 1300 houses a year. In 1922, home building "rang the bell"—reaching a total of 1879 houses. While some relief was afforded, yet it was not as great as it might seem, because during the same period we tore down 225 tenements displacing 400 families.

## ARE WE BUILDING LOW-COST HOMES?

How many of these 1879 homes built in 1922 were within the reach of families of moderate means? We can dismiss the question of building homes for actually poor people—we know with certainty that since the war period it has been impossible here as well as everywhere else to build homes for people of the very low income group. The skilled working-man and the clerk has at least a somewhat better chance. He cannot afford, however, to buy a house for which he has to pay more than \$5000 or at the most \$6000—even at that price such a house will cost him from \$40 to \$50 a month if he is to pay for his home within any reasonable period. Are we meeting his pocket-book?

Careful analysis of the permits for homes issued last year shows that of the 1879 permits issued only about 370 or 20% could possibly be built at a cost, with the land, of \$6000 or less—only 10%, or about 200 houses, would come below \$5000. These estimates are over-liberal because they cover actual cost only and make no allowance for carrying charges. At least 80% and probably more of all houses built last year were completely beyond the reach of families of moderate income. We made a study of practically all of the projects announced by builders during the past year who build low-cost homes in quantities. We found that few of these developments have actually materialized. In several cases, 4 or 5 houses were built, but in no case has any large number been constructed



by any one builder. About all we can expect until prices have readjusted to a lower level is to provide houses for those classes in the community who can afford to buy homes built at present prices and in this way indirectly to relieve the pressure at the bottom.

### SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

Our housing conditions are considerably better than they were eight or ten years ago. Efficient, but reasonable enforcement of our housing regulations by the Housing Bureau of the Building Department and the Sanitary Division of the Health Department, together with the work of the Visiting Housekeepers of the Better Housing League have eliminated many of our worst tenement conditions. During the past year alone, the Visiting Housekeepers have made 8938 visits to families both white and colored to educate them in the care of their homes and have brought about definite improvements in the housekeeping of 589 families. Through the cooperation of both tenants and owners they have helped in having 5538 bad housing conditions remedied. They have visited every immigrant family coming into this city during the past three years and at the very outset have instructed them in American standards of living and their obligations as tenants, thus helping to minimize the dangers of the unassimilated foreign-born.

We have fewer tenement houses in Cincinnati than was thought, though our tenement population is large, constituting 30% of the total inhabitants. We are gradually decreasing the size of this problem because we are tearing down old tenements as they wear out, and few new ones are being built. There are probably at least 1000 fewer tenements today than there were 7 or 8 years ago. Tenement rentals have increased radically since 1918. The higher rentals have hit the tenement population hard, since they are in large part unskilled workers whose wages have probably not increased in proportion. In spite of this hardship, the larger number of improvements that have been made in tenement houses as a result of the better returns on the investment mean that from the broad point of view our general housing condition is improved.

Our "Basin" population is growing less year by year and these families are moving into one or two-family houses in the

suburbs. Home ownership is altogether too low here, but it is increasing at the rate of one-half of 1% a year. This rate of increase must be quickened. Building and Loan Associations upon which most of the families of moderate means depend for financing their homes, must be encouraged as well as banks and other organizations that lend money at reasonable rates. The fact that present day building costs seem to be eliminating the \$5000 house is a serious matter. It means that even the skilled workman finds it almost impossible to buy a house. Home ownership is bound to be held back until this situation is in some way readjusted. The housing shortage has been but little relieved and high costs are preventing the building of homes at a rate adequate to meet the demand.

All in all the most hopeful factor in the situation is the rise of the small home and the decline of the tenement. Nothing can mean more to the future of this city than to continue this trend. There is no single factor that will do so much to guide our development in the direction of attractive small homes as a carefully worked out practical city plan and Zoning system. The Technical Advisory Corporation is making commendable progress on the making of our plan and expects to be ready to present the tentative Zone map and regulations within the next few weeks.

Cincinnati is about to have one of the most striking demonstrations in the United States of what small low-cost homes should be. Mrs. Mary Emery is projecting a housing development which if carried out along the lines contemplated will have no parallel in this country. It is a great thing for Cincinnati. It is bound to have a beneficial effect on our home building for the future.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE

Exec. Sec'y, Cincinnati Better Housing League

## OPPOSITION TO ZONING

If organized opposition to the Zoning movement on the part of real estate and financial interests had appeared in the early days of this movement no one would have been surprised. To have such opposition now appear, after Zoning has been in force and effect for 10 years and has won universal acceptance

throughout the entire country by all groups and classes in the community, is indeed somewhat surprising.

While the opposition that has manifested itself recently is neither formidable nor general—being confined practically to two cities and to a handful of men—it has had an influence in deterring other cities from undertaking Zoning, due largely to the organized manner in which those opposed to Zoning have made their views manifest.

While we would in no way magnify the importance of this opposition—for little importance is to be paid to it—all students of the Zoning movement and especially the promoters of that movement would do well to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the “arguments” of its opponents which they will find set forth in print in two documents recently published. One of these is a pamphlet of 52 pages entitled “The Principles of Zoning” by William P. Gest, President of the Fidelity Trust Company of Philadelphia; the other a shorter document by Howard Andrew Starret of Detroit, entitled “The Menace of Zoning to Detroit Explained”.

While both of these documents bristle with mis-statements and both make much of the absurd argument that Zoning is un-American and was “made in Germany” they would undoubtedly have some effect if placed in the hands of a person unfamiliar with the Zoning movement. Such a person would naturally be influenced by the commanding power of the printed word, and would assume the accuracy of statements coming from a person speaking with the responsibility of the position which attaches to the author of one of these documents.

If people in communities where Zoning is proposed are in doubt as to the desirability of Zoning for their community, the sensible thing to do is to get testimony from the 144 cities where Zoning is already in force, and especially from those cities where it has been in effect for a number of years; instead of heeding the theoretical objections of a few individuals whose personal interests are adversely affected, in cities where Zoning is only *proposed* and has not been in effect at all.

We have yet to learn of any case where opposition has shown itself to Zoning in those cities where Zoning laws have been adopted.

## THE SITUATION IN CLEVELAND

In Cleveland where the Zoning movement has been hanging fire for nearly a year, there has recently been a distinct change for the better in the situation. In connection with the Convention of the National Association of Real Estate Boards held at Cleveland the latter part of June, a meeting was organized by the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of discussing the Cleveland Zoning Ordinance. The principal speakers at this meeting were Lawrence Veiller, Walter Stabler and Ernest Goodrich of New York, all of whom happened to be in Cleveland as speakers at the real estate convention.

The meeting was attended by about 40 persons among whom were a number of members of the Cleveland City Council and especially of the Committee in which the Zoning Ordinance now slumbers.

As a result of this meeting, which was presided over by Morris I. Black, former Chairman of the Cleveland City Plan Commission, the Chairman of the Building Code Committee of the Council announced very frankly that he had had a change of heart; that up to the time of the meeting he had been "icy cold" toward the cause of Zoning; that he was frank to admit that he had been responsible for keeping the Zoning Ordinance "in the can"; but that he now saw the whole question in a different light, and that, instead of being "icy cold", he was now at least "luke warm" toward Zoning; and gave his promise that after the summer vacation was over he would see that the ordinance was reported out of Committee and brought up for the consideration of the entire Council.

It is to be hoped that the friends of Zoning in Cleveland will at once organize a widespread campaign of education similar to the campaigns which were carried on so successfully in New York and Chicago, "selling" Zoning to the people of Cleveland.

It is largely due to the failure of the promoters of the cause of Zoning in Cleveland to undertake this task, that the Cleveland ordinance is hanging fire today. Had there been in Cleveland the same complete, thorough and patient education on the subject of Zoning of the rank and file of the people



of Cleveland, that there was in New York and Chicago, Zoning in Cleveland would today be an accomplished fact.

## CHICAGO ADOPTS ZONING

The Chicago City Council by unanimous vote on April 6th, last, adopted the Zoning Ordinance which was signed by the Mayor ten days later.

One of the interesting features of the Chicago situation has been the position of the Chicago Real Estate Board, which not only actively supported the ordinance in question, but even recommended that more stringent requirements, especially as to the limitation of the height of buildings, be included in the ordinance.

A close student of the Chicago situation commenting on the new ordinance has the following to say:

While I am sure that the ordinance will in the end be of untold value to the city's development, I very much deplore the fact that the ordinance crystallizes present standards and does not mark any advance. There are one or two points in which a slight retrograding occurs.

The principal objection which I make to the ordinance is the fact that only about 5% of the total area of the city is given up for single-family houses. A large vacant area, some of which is still not subdivided was set apart for 2-family house development. I believe that this was a mistake, as large patches could have been Zoned for single-family housing, and if in the future the speculative developer desired a more intensive use, this could easily have been granted.

The action of this metropolitan center of the Middle West in adopting Zoning by unanimous vote should prove an encouragement to "go and do likewise" to those cities in the Middle West where Zoning Ordinances are still hanging fire, notably in Cleveland, Detroit and Pittsburgh.

## REAL HEIGHT RESTRICTION ON FIFTH AVENUE

Ask the man in the street whether it is possible, in a city like New York and on a show street like upper Fifth Avenue

with its high land values, to restrict the height of buildings hereafter erected on that Avenue above 59th Street to the comparatively low height of 75 feet and he will smile at you with a superior smile and think that your inquiry is a jocose one.

And yet that is what has been done and the courts have recently sustained it.

When the original New York City Zoning Resolution was adopted this section of Fifth Avenue above 59th Street was made a "1½ Times District" as to height; that is, a district in which buildings hereafter erected might be erected to a height of 1½ times the width of the Avenue before necessitating any setback.

On November 25th, 1921, the Board of Estimate and Apportionment in New York City—the local legislative body having this matter in charge—adopted an amendment to the Zoning Resolution changing this district from a "1½ Times District" to a "¾ Times District". As Fifth Avenue at this point is 100 feet in width the effect of this amendment is to limit the height of all buildings hereafter erected upon this street to the comparatively low height of 75 feet, when, before the amendment was passed, buildings were permitted to be erected to double that height, viz., 150 feet.

The question of whether this revised provision of the New York Zoning Resolution was a reasonable exercise of the police power has recently been tested in a case brought before Justice Giegerich of the Supreme Court who, in March, handed down a decision sustaining the Zoning Resolution at every point and holding that:

Since the amendment was within the power of the body which passed it, the presumption is that it is reasonable and just and the judicial power to declare it void can be exercised only when, from the inherent character of the amendment or from evidence showing its operation and effect it is demonstrated to be otherwise. The burden of showing the unreasonableness from evidence is on the person asserting it. It cannot be said as matter of law on the facts appearing in the papers that the amendment is unreasonable and unjust, and it would seem after careful consideration that the amendment meets every known test as to reasonableness and that it is not discriminatory nor oppressive and that it was adopted to secure safety from fire or other dangers, to promote public health and welfare, promote the most desirable use for which land in the district may be adapted and to conserve the value of buildings therein. *Matter of Palmer v. Mann, &c., et al. (N. Y. L. J., March 14, 1923, pages 2006-7).*

It will be interesting and instructive to see whether the higher courts to which this case will undoubtedly be appealed will coincide with Justice Giegerich in his decision.

## ZONING THROUGH POLICE POWER AND NOT THROUGH EMINENT DOMAIN

How important it is for the friends of Zoning to be alert—and even to preserve Zoning from its friends—was illustrated this winter when a bill was introduced in the Michigan legislature proposing to add to the existing Zoning Enabling Act the following provision :

Provided, however, That provision shall be made in any charter provision or ordinance enacted pursuant to the provisions of this act for determination of damages and payment thereof to anyone whose property is injured by such regulations, the procedure under this proviso to be as similar as may be to that provided for such city in determining damages and payment thereof in condemnation proceedings instituted by such city, any general or local act to the contrary notwithstanding.

Those interested in Zoning in Michigan and more especially in the city of Detroit, very wisely called to their aid the wise experience and legal knowledge of Edward M. Bassett, Counsel to the Zoning Committee of New York.

Mr. Bassett prepared a memorandum to the Michigan legislature on this subject, which was published by the Detroit City Plan Commission, which presents so clearly the principles involved in Zoning Laws and the distinction between Zoning through police power and proceeding under eminent domain, that we print this memorandum in full. Mr. Bassett said :

This proposed amendment springs from a misconception of the zoning enabling act. The zoning enabling act merely grants to each city and village the police power to regulate the height, bulk and use of buildings. The enabling act itself cannot possibly be unlawful because it merely grants what the legislature possesses, and no more. If, however, a municipality employs this grant of police power so that the zoning is unreasonable, or discriminatory, or confiscatory, toward any property owner, then the ordinance in that particular is void. The reason it is void is because the state constitution provides that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. If the municipality should employ the police power granted it by the state legislature in a manner that was unreasonable, discriminatory or confiscatory, the courts

would consider that the citizen was deprived of his property without due course of law, and consequently such provision in that instance would be void.

The above considerations show the impropriety of the proposed amendment. The amendment endeavors to say that where a zoning provision is void, damages must be paid to the property owner. The courts will protect property owners against unreasonable, discriminatory or confiscatory regulation. Zoning is not taking private property for a public use. Zoning cannot be accomplished under eminent domain. Accordingly it is absurd and unworkable to make a provision for money payment in exactly those cases where the courts will protect the private citizen by declaring the ordinance void.

But someone may say that the zoning will entail injury in some cases even if the regulations are reasonable, non-discriminatory and non-confiscatory. In rare instances that may be true. Sometimes a piece of property might be better off if it were outside of the fire limits instead of inside. Or a man could make more money if he could disregard strength of beams, sanitary requirements in plumbing, or fireproof construction, but he is not paid money damages by the city for these minor injuries because they are a part and parcel of the community health and safety requirements.

For the prevention of the spread of epidemics, people are compelled to submit to some impairment of their property rights, or some disturbance of their personal comfort, but this is in the interest of the safety of the entire community, and the individual cannot collect damages against the city or state. Each citizen is obliged to give up somewhat of the absolute control of his own property in order that the property of all may be safeguarded. His recompense for giving up something of the absolute control of his own property is that he, along with all other citizens, is protected by reasonable police power law.

The proposed amendment would result in litigation. If a zoning regulation appeared to injure a citizen and he appealed to the courts, the courts would be perplexed as to whether the zoning regulations were enforced under eminent domain, or whether under the police power. The court would refer to the enabling act and discover at once that the legislature stated that the zoning is enforced under the police power. The court would then declare the particular provision void if it were unreasonable and confiscatory. The litigant, perhaps having partly erected his building, would want damages and would carry on appeals on the theory that he could choose between the police power provisions of the law and the eminent domain provision. This mixture of the police power and eminent domain would bring about an endless chance for litigation. It would be hard to prophesy how the courts would solve it. The courts endeavor to give effect to every legislative provision. The fault would not be the fault of the courts if litigation became complex, or the zoning ordinance became unworkable. The legislature would be to blame for creating a situation which was self-contradictory.



Let us assume for the moment that the city should make payment to some property owner who claimed to be injured. The city at large would not assume this expense but would desire to assess it upon the property benefited. This would entail two separate proceedings—one proceeding under eminent domain to ascertain the amount of the damage and another proceeding to assess it on the property benefited. The first proceeding would be expensive. The second would not only be expensive but extremely irritating to the other property owners. If, however, the city assumed the entire burden, the city would before long go bankrupt, as every man who conceived that he suffered some injury would drag the city into litigation.

But the litigation, expense and delay might not be the worst result of this improvident amendment. After a property owner had received from the public purse an amount of money to represent his damages, the public would have obtained by eminent domain an easement over the property. The property owner would have suffered a diminution of his complete title. This diminution or easement would follow his property for generations or centuries. It could only be taken off by another court proceeding.

A succession of such permanent alterations of property rights scattered throughout the city would bring about an impossible and unbearable situation. The growth and necessary change of the city would be impaired and embarrassed. Certain pieces of property could not be used for the natural purposes for which the growth or change of the locality made it desirable. The city would gradually become ossified. Condemnation is permanent. The exercise of the police power without any admixture of eminent domain is easily altered as circumstances require. This alteration is accomplished by a mere amendment to the zoning ordinance passed by the city council.

If this amendment is introduced into the state enabling act, it will be the end of zoning in Michigan until it is taken out. City councils will be afraid of enormous claims for damages. They will say that the legislature intended that people should receive damages, and no amount of explanation will cause councils to go ahead and pass zoning ordinances, however reasonable and carefully prepared. City officials and property owners naturally look on the legislature as a body that attends to these things carefully and according to law. Therefore they will consider that the legislature intended that damages should be given in almost every case and not that the legislature had regard for the extremely exceptional case. Councils do not want to take any great risk, and they cannot be blamed.

The Board of Appeals provision of the Michigan state enabling act protects property owners from any danger of unreasonable, discriminatory or confiscatory regulations. The property owner need not even employ a lawyer. He can, by the most simple procedure, present his exceptional case of hardship to the Board of Appeals, and the Board of Appeals will see that his permit is so adjusted as to be reasonable and proper.

In the City of New York the zoning regulations have been in force for seven years. The Board of Appeals has passed on hundreds of cases of building permits, and has adjusted them to the satisfaction of all the property owners. There has been no need of any allowance of damages for injury to property owners in Greater New York. Moreover, the courts have never declared that any provision of the zoning ordinance, or any regulation of the zoning maps, even as affecting a single building, was unreasonable, confiscatory or discriminatory. The zoning has been upheld by the courts to the extent of 100%.

Wherever a state legislature has mixed police power and eminent domain in a zoning enabling act, there has been a complete stoppage of zoning. The State of Minnesota a few years ago passed such an act. Nothing in the way of zoning was done until it was repealed and a police power enactment substituted in its place. The State of Illinois attached a provision for compensation to its first zoning enabling act. Nothing was done under it, or could safely be done under it, by any large city of the state. After a while it was amended to strike out the provision for payment of damages, and since that time zoning has gone on rapidly in the State of Illinois. No case can be found in the United States where there has been a successful mixing together of the police power and eminent domain in the field of zoning. Moreover, every attempt in this country to accomplish zoning by eminent domain has been a flat failure.

In Senate Bill No. 135, same legislature and same state, an amendment to the home rule act is proposed by making a mandatory provision for damages wherever a city exercises the zoning power. This amendment is equally dangerous and ineffective as the amendment heretofore referred to and discussed.

Largely as a result of Mr. Bassett's presentation of the subject to the Michigan legislature the committee voted unanimously *not* to report out the proposed legislation.

## CITY STREETS AS GARAGES

An interesting and thought-provoking discussion of the perplexing problems involved in the increased use of the city's streets by motor cars, with special reference to the "parking" problem will be found in an article by Herbert S. Swan entitled "Our City Thoroughfares—Shall They Be Highways or Garages?" Copies of this 4-page pamphlet can be obtained from Mr. Swan at 15 Park Row, New York.

## EXCLUDING BUSINESS FROM RESIDENCE ZONES

### A RECENT KANSAS DECISION

The proposition that business can be excluded from residence districts under the police power through a comprehensive Zoning ordinance has been generally assumed. Many court decisions have been handed down, from which we all have inferred that this exclusion, if reasonably exercised, would be upheld by the courts. In the case of *Lincoln Trust Company v. Williams Building Corporation* (169 N. Y. Supp. 1045; 183 App. Div. 225; 229 N. Y. 313) the highest court of New York state declared that the Zoning Resolution of New York City was as a whole a reasonable invocation of the police power and consequently was valid. As residence districts shown on the Zoning map excluded business, this was tantamount to a declaration that the court upheld the exclusion of business from residence Zones.

The *Opinion of the Justices* (127 N. E. Reports 525) upheld the segregation of manufacturing, commercial and mercantile business and stated that "health and security from injury of children and the old and feeble and otherwise less robust portion of the public well may be thought to be promoted by requiring that dwelling houses be separated from the territory devoted to trade and industry." The Opinion of the Justices, however, was given to the legislature of the state of Massachusetts on request, before the adoption of a constitutional amendment regarding Zoning and the opinion did not have a precise application to any particular structure.

Strange as it may seem, the well-known *Cusack* case (267 Ill. 344; 242 U. S. 526), although relating to billboards in the city of Chicago, has been one of the best cases in this country on this general subject. It was a decision of the highest court of Illinois, affirmed by the United States Supreme Court, and held that the objectionable features of billboards connected with litter, animals, hiding and darkening made them subject to exclusion from certain districts under reasonable regulations.

Several cases in courts of first resort have impliedly upheld exclusion, but there have been about as many cases in such courts that have not upheld it. It should be said, however, that

the instances where such exclusion has not been so upheld have been where the local Zoning was without a state enabling act or where it was general and preliminary or where it was piecemeal and preferential. Strictly speaking these were not Zoning cases.

In the case of *State ex rel. Koslov v. Quigley, Inspector of Buildings of the City of Paterson*, (New Jersey Supreme Court, decision filed November 8, 1922), where the Zoning was comprehensive and of the most thorough-going character, the court held that it was unreasonable to prevent a property owner from using his building for store purposes where it was partly surrounded by other stores. An action is now pending in the Supreme Court of New Jersey, (*State ex rel. Ignaciunas v. Risley, Inspector of Buildings of the Town of Nutley*), where the question is quite squarely presented whether in that state a Zoning ordinance can exclude a store from a district which is now entirely residential and is so Zoned. The decision of this case is awaited with interest. Whichever way it is decided, it will probably be appealed to the highest court of the state.

From the foregoing review it will be seen that a straight-from-the-shoulder decision of an appellate court to the effect, that under a Zoning ordinance business can be excluded in a specific case from a residence district surely marks another forward step in the progress of Zoning. Such an opinion was filed March 10th, 1923, in the Supreme Court of Kansas in *Ware v. City of Wichita*. All the judges concurred. After Ware applied for a permit for a store building, a Zoning ordinance was passed by the city of Wichita. This ordinance put the plot on which the store was to be built in a residence district. The appellate court was unanimous that the police power was reasonably and properly applied in the ordinance and that Ware should not be allowed to build his store. Declaring that the permit should not be issued, the court stated:

The next contention is that the Zoning ordinance and the statute which authorizes it have the effect of taking defendant's property or of diminishing its value without compensation. It often happens that a valid exercise of the police power has such effect. \* \* \* Such legislation is merely a liberalized application of the general welfare purposes of state and federal constitution. \* \* \*

It need hardly be said that a valid statute expressly granting to cities such power is just as potent as a constitutional



provision to the same effect. \* \* \*

It cannot be denied, however, that there is good ground for the view that a reasonable Zoning ordinance has some pertinent relation to the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community. \* \* \* Our own court is committed to the view that if there is fair ground for differences of opinion touching the existence of an evil to be remedied, the police power may be invoked to suppress it, and the legislature is the exclusive arbiter of when, how, and to what extent it may be invoked.

One might wish that in the trial of this case evidence had been introduced to show that stores in a purely residence district affect health and safety. For instance, they bring trucks which are dangerous, litter and dust that are unhealthful, noise in the early morning that disturbs children and sick people, and increased fire hazard that is recognized by insurers. The court might take judicial notice of these facts, but if the court did take such notice in this case the opinion does not refer to such facts.

EDWARD M. BASSETT  
New York City

## GETTING THE NEIGHBORS' CONSENT TO ZONING

An interesting and novel proposal is embodied in a bill introduced by Senator Thompson of Nassau County at the New York legislative session which has just come to a close, providing that where a Zoning Ordinance is proposed for adoption or amendment by any town in Nassau County which applies to territory within a village, city or town within 500 feet of any portion of the boundary between it and any other village, city or town in the same county, that such legislation shall not become effective unless and until it shall be ratified by the town board or other appropriate authority of the town or city adjacent.

The bill also contains provisions requiring public hearings and 15 days' notice of such hearings before any Zoning Resolution affecting property within this radius can become effective. The bill in question did not become a law and its enactment will undoubtedly be urged at succeeding legislative sessions.

This is certainly a new development in Zoning practice and just where it will lead one hesitates to say.

## ZONING AND THE COURTS

When Zoning laws were first proposed about 10 years ago there was considerable doubt in the minds of many people as to whether the courts would sustain what then seemed an extension of the police power, and there were many learned opinions rendered by "near-lawyers" calling in question many of the proposals that were then being considered.

That was 10 years ago and much water has gone over the dam in that time.

Edward M. Bassett, the Counsel of the New York Zoning Committee and the leading authority in this country on the subject of Zoning, has from time to time presented to the public in these columns and elsewhere the questions involved in the leading cases which have been before the courts. The service which Mr. Bassett has thus rendered has been invaluable to the cause of Zoning.

Recently, in connection with the National Conference on City Planning that was held in Baltimore early in May, Mr. Bassett discussed the present attitude of the courts toward Zoning.

This presentation adds a new milestone in the Zoning movement, for only now with the lapse of time and the handing down of a sufficient number of decisions has it been possible to have a philosophic consideration of the fundamental questions involved in the attitude of our courts toward this important public question.

In this article Mr. Bassett reviews the fundamental principles of Zoning, discussing the essentials of the Standard Zoning Enabling Act and reviewing some of the leading cases on this subject. One thing he says which is of particular value. Speaking on the question of the constitutionality of Zoning Ordinances he says:

It is quite likely that the day has passed when the validity of the power to Zone will be denied. The only question will be whether the application of the regulations to a particular plot of land is constitutional.

Every student of Zoning will find it advantageous to avail himself of a copy of Mr. Bassett's most recent discussion of this sub-

ject, published in a pamphlet of 24 pages which can be obtained from the National Conference on City Planning at 130 East 22d Street, New York City.

## BUILDING HEIGHTS AND ANCIENT LIGHTS

With the persistency that is often attributed to his race, Delissa Joseph, a London architect, has once more returned to the effort to bring about a relaxation in the legal requirements of the London Building Bye-laws so as to permit the building in London of skyscrapers such as America is now beginning to outlaw.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Mr. Joseph returned to the attack, notwithstanding the uniformly unvarying defeats that he has heretofore encountered in this cause, and urged upon the architects of London that they should support a movement for the letting down of the London Building Laws so as to permit the building of much higher buildings than are permitted at present.

What differentiates this latest attack of Mr. Joseph from his earlier efforts in this field is the coupling of his suggestions with a proposal that the Law of Ancient Lights should also practically be abolished; for, Mr. Joseph has been rather slow in waking to a realization that even if the London Building Bye-laws were relaxed, the building of skyscrapers would not proceed, owing to the Law of Ancient Lights under which punitive damages would unquestionably be awarded by the London courts to neighboring buildings. And so, as Mr. Joseph evidently very earnestly desires to be permitted to build skyscrapers in London, he now proposes that not only shall the London Building Laws be relaxed to permit this, but that the Law of Ancient Lights shall at the same time be done away with.

Frankly, we are not greatly surprised at this suggestion; for if London were to permit buildings to be built like one of our New York skyscrapers which at noon on December 21st casts a shadow one-fifth of a mile in length and spreading over  $7\frac{1}{2}$  acres, it is obvious that with the Law of Ancient Lights in existence the damages which the projectors of such a building would have to pay to neighboring property would make the scheme an unprofitable one.

Students of this subject, both of the limitation of high buildings and the Law of Ancient Lights will find Mr. Joseph's proposal and the interesting discussion which followed it, both entertaining and profitable reading. They are published in the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* of June 16th.

## A MODEL REPORT

All students of the technique of Zoning and City Planning will wish to obtain a copy of the Report of the Atlanta City Planning Commission for 1922, recently issued, Robert H. Whitten, Consultant.

This report is a model document of its kind. It contains a historical statement of the City Planning movement in Atlanta, the progress of that movement, a discussion of Zoning, Land Sub-Division, Street Widening and Extension, Building Lines and Financing of Improvements. Appended to the report are: A Planning Programme for Atlanta by Mr. Whitten, reprints of editorial comment on the Zoning Ordinance from Atlanta's leading papers, and in the form of an Appendix the text of the charter amendment creating the City Planning Commission, the text of the Zoning Law, the text of the Street Widening and Extension Law, of the law relative to the Approval of Sub-Division Plats, the Rules and Regulations Governing the Platting of Land and the full text of the Zoning Ordinance. Accompanying the report is the Zone Map of Atlanta.

## REGIONAL PLANNING IN PRACTICE

A striking example of what City Planning actually means in practice has recently been afforded the people of New York City through the publication by the Committee on Plan of New York and Its Environs, of which Frederick P. Keppel is Secretary, of a series of maps and diagrams giving the results of the Physical Survey of New York and its environs made thus far by this Committee. In a most attractively printed pamphlet of 40 pages bearing the title "Maps and Diagrams" there is set forth a series of maps and diagrams with a brief statement on an opposite page in each case of the fundamental facts connected with the map and diagram in question.



The subjects thus discussed include such questions as:

Territory Included; Density of Population in the Entire Area; Population Density in the Central Area in 1850 and in the Same Area in 1920; Trunk Line Highways; Theoretical Diagram of Main Roads; Traffic Density on Main Roads; The Topography of the Region; Passenger Train Service in the Central District; Railroad Commuting Fare Zones; Railroad Commuting Time Zones; Parks and Open Spaces; Area, Population and Parks in Urban and Rural Districts; Comparison of Public and Private Provision for Recreation; Congestion in the New York Theater District; Progress of Zoning in the Territory Within 30 Miles of New York.

The Committee has also recently issued a forecast of the estimated population in the year 2,000, of the region which they are studying, based on expert statistical study.

Their experts estimate that in the year 2,000 the population of the region will be 29,000,000; that by that time the negro population will have tripled its present quota. The foreign-born population, it is estimated, will have increased from 2,080,000 to approximately 3,750,000 which will be 26.9% of the then population as compared with 36.3% of the present population. How vast the problems are which this Committee is dealing with is well illustrated by these figures.

Every student of City Planning should immediately obtain a copy of this important document entitled "Maps and Diagrams" which can be obtained from the Committee at 130 East 22nd Street for 25 cents.

## A BY-PRODUCT OF ZONING

When those responsible for the New York Zoning Ordinance were first considering the problems involved in the Zoning of a great metropolitan center like New York, and especially the effect that limiting the height of buildings would have, there was much discussion of the possibility of adding to the beauty of the city by encouraging through the Zoning Law the erection of buildings with high towers.

At that time there were but two or three such buildings in the city, viz., the Metropolitan Tower, Madison Square Garden, the Singer Building and the Woolworth Building.

It was with deliberate purpose therefore that the Zoning Ordinance enacted as a result of the Commission's recommendations provided for a scheme of "set-backs" of the front wall of the

building beyond a certain limit of height, permitting towers to be erected to practically unlimited height, provided they did not occupy more than a certain proportion of the area of the building.

That the results anticipated by the members of the Heights of Buildings Commission have been achieved was recently testified to by a New York architect, Harvey W. Corbett, who said:

The set-back type of building is going to establish a style in architecture, not only in New York City but throughout the entire United States. The set-back building represents a tremendous advance over the old type building. It means more light and more air.

The architects would have been willing to give almost anything in the old days to design a building along lines now made obligatory by the law. Of course, they couldn't design set-back buildings then because the prospective owners were not willing to bear the increased costs. But since it is obligatory, the architects now are able to work out some wonderful effects.

### POPULARITY OF THE SET-BACK

Mr. Corbett said that the popularity of the new set-back skyscraper evolved in New York was due not only to the fact that this type of building is a great advance over other designs, but that the demand for it is due in a large measure simply to the fact that the set-back building marks the advent of an entirely new style of architecture.

Prospective owners of lofty buildings are taking up this style just as they would any other style. They want it the same as they would want a new necktie. It is modern and up to date, and will rapidly replace older types of buildings that have to give way to the march of progress.

He added:

The development of the set-back building is the finest thing that ever happened in an architectural line. It means escape from the deadly monotony of tall buildings where the architect had to rely upon the trimmings for variety. The small details are usually lost in a large building, and the set-back, or break in the building line, affords wonderful relief.

Mr. Corbett said that he had found types of the set-back building completed or under construction in Atlantic City, in Buffalo and Chicago. None of those cities is under compulsion by ordinance or otherwise to follow New York City in style of architecture. But, according to Mr. Corbett, they simply like the new set-back building and are determined to have it.

He pointed out that the set-back idea was followed by John Mead Howells, son of William Dean Howells, when the younger Mr. Howells designed his prize-winning sketch of the proposed new building of The Chicago Tribune. The building sketched by Mr. Howells will be one of the most modern and imposing in the Middle West, and will probably mark the start of the set-back style of New York in Chicago.

## SUBURBAN ZONING

An interesting presentation of the problems involved in suburban Zoning with particular application to suburban New York and Long Island, has been presented by Edward M. Bassett in a pamphlet recently published by the Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

In this pamphlet Mr. Bassett discusses such questions as: The Fundamentals of Zoning; Must Base Laws on Health, Safety and Community Welfare; Zoning Better than Private Restrictions; Values of Homes Made More Stable; Protection B. Zoning; The Zoning of Villages; Need Amendment Permitting Town Zoning; Why Zoning Helps Permanence of the Home.

Copies of this pamphlet can be obtained from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle at a price of 10 cents each.

## MISTAKES TO AVOID IN ZONING

At the annual convention of the National Association of Real Estate Boards recently held in Cleveland at which 3500 realtors from all parts of the country were present, an address was delivered by Lawrence Veiller on "Mistakes To Be Avoided In Zoning". Mr. Veiller's address will be found in the *National Real Estate Journal* of July 2.

## ZONING AND LAND VALUES

Recent testimony to the value of Zoning laws comes from Chicago. According to George C. Olcott, author of an annual known as the Land Values Blue Book and an authority on the subject of values in Chicago and its environs,

"Values in Evanston have increased from 15 to 100%, the latter being due largely to the Zoning Ordinance. In Oak Park residential property during the year rose from 10 to 25%; apartment house districts from 25 to 50%; business streets 25 to 75%, due largely to Zoning regulations."

This practical testimony of the value of Zoning in a way that can be actually weighed and assessed is extremely helpful to the cause of Zoning. It is hoped that promoters of Zoning in other communities will from time to time furnish similar figures thus showing the direct and valuable effects of Zoning laws.

## THE PROGRESS OF ZONING

The latest published figures as to the progress of Zoning compiled by Charles B. Ball of Chicago will be found in the *National Real Estate Journal*, June issue.

At the present time there are now 144 cities in the United States which have passed either complete Zoning Ordinances or "use" Zoning Ordinances. Of these, 110 have the complete ordinance including Zoning for Use, Area and Height. Twenty-nine of the cities Zoned have a population of 100,000 or over, and 39 have a population of from 25,000 to 100,000.

The smallest community in the country functioning under a Zoning ordinance is the town of Idlewild, Ohio, with a population of 131. In presenting the information in question, the cities that are Zoned are grouped in 7 different groups as follows: 200,000 and over; 100,000 to 200,000; 50,000 to 100,000; 25,000 to 50,000; 10,000 to 25,000; 5,000 to 10,000; and 5,000 and under.

The presentation of this subject compressed into less than 3 pages of this magazine is one of the most effective documents that we have seen in recent years, for it not only groups the cities as indicated, but also gives an alphabetical list of those cities with a key reference to their size, a statement of their population, the date of the ordinance, whether it is a complete or partial one and the name of the technical consultant responsible for its preparation.

The spread of the Zoning movement since 1920 is quite surprising. At that time there were only 28 cities in the country that were Zoned. Since then 116 additional cities have been Zoned. Of these 10 were zoned in 1920, 30 in 1921, 61 in 1922 and 15 thus far in the current year.

That the Zoning movement has not spread equally over all parts of the United States was naturally to have been expected. Of the 144 Zoned cities, 123 were found in 7 states. In the number of cities Zoned New Jersey leads with 40 cities, followed by New York with 21, California and Illinois with 17 each, Ohio with 10 and Massachusetts and Wisconsin with 9 each.



## TOWN PLANNING IN THE FEDERATED MALAY STATES

To readers of sea-stories, the Malay Peninsula and its islands are the abiding place of pirates. Therefore with somewhat of a shock we discover that town planning is now making progress in this region of adventure. Doubtless the desire for self-improvement on the part of the natives is still paramount, but we can discover no ulterior motives in the Report of the Town Planner.

The Report covers 30 closely printed pages. It is arranged in numbered paragraphs, doubtless to enable the Acting Under Secretary to whom it is addressed to use his blue pencil with the least delay, and in general to expedite the progress of the document through the minds of all the Bureaus. Evidently the writer of the Report, Charles C. Reade, Government Town Planner, desires no phase of his work to escape the notice of the Government, and he has chosen his words to make his points clear at a glance. For economy the plans for new and for existing towns are not printed with the Report, and can only be seen at Kuala Lumpur at the Government Offices.

A perusal of the Report brings to light many points of technical interest to planners in America, but in general the problems of the Malays are not widely different from our own, as seen for example in the following quotations from the Report. These should be read as isolated paragraphs.

Both in Negri Sembilan and Pahang, sites for new towns, consequent upon the opening up of the main trunk line to Kelantan, have been chosen and developments have occurred or are taking place in some cases with what seems to be an insufficient regard for considerations that ordinarily arise under town planning. The Governments of these States have expressed a desire that town planning advice should be given in respect to these problems.

\* \* \* \* \*

Where growing towns like Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, etc., are not given the protection of modern Zoning practice, values and property in parts are unexpectedly depreciated by the intrusion of unexpected elements—factories, timber yards,

garages, etc., with loss and inconvenience to the owner, or chargee, and the community.

\* \* \* \* \*

Primarily town planning means the control and regulation of the laying-out and use of land and the erection of buildings by individuals or public authorities in order that private or public capital periodically expended on such works is productive of orderly and convenient development which will not, in future, require rectification at Government or Sanitary Board expense.

\* \* \* \* \*

Likewise the private owner has much to gain and little to fear from a wise policy of town planning maintained over a series of years and under which he will be assured:

(a) That his land is planned free.

(b) That the policy laid down under general town plans or improvement schemes is a permanent policy and cannot be revoked at short notice by individual action.

(c) That his land and investment is secure against depreciation by intrusion of unexpected factories, unsuitable premises, or undue over-building or other wrong use by adjoining owners.

(d) That he knows exactly how the town is planned or how any district or area therein will develop and the chief communications, open spaces and residential amenity, are secured.

(e) That he, or his agent, can offer these things as special inducements to the incoming purchaser.

(f) That he can, under the Town Planning Act, bargain with the responsible authorities to make roads, etc., in return for land surrendered for open spaces or public purposes.

(g) That neither he nor the purchaser can be secure against depreciation, over-building in the neighborhood, destruction of amenity, etc., under present conditions because of the absence of effective statutory powers, and

(h) Because finally he will have a steadily appreciating security and investment which bankers and others are bound to recognize.

\* \* \* \* \*

These exchanges were arranged on the basis of replanning proposals which converted awkward shaped holdings into convenient plots of particular utility and value for building purposes. In this way difficulties due to awkward boundaries of the original holdings have been overcome, adequate provision for future main roads and access generally provided,

open spaces secured and the orderly planning of the district effected in advance of constructional works without expense to the Government other than the cost of several re-surveys which the owners having already paid for under the former sub-division could not, in the circumstances, be expected to pay again.

\* \* \* \* \*

In some cases, town planning by negotiation is certain to fail unless under town planning legislation a definite procedure is laid down for the settlement of disputes in the preparation and carrying out of improvement schemes, and development and building generally is subject to control by the duly constituted responsible authorities, viz., Town Planning Committees, etc.

\* \* \* \* \*

To bring the case nearer home, every responsible person is, I take it, anxious to prevent in the future growth and development of the large towns of the Federated Malay States any repetition of the costly difficulties or deficiencies which, in recent decades, have accumulated so rapidly in Singapore in spite of methods of control that, in many respects, correspond with those extant in these States.

The above quotations illustrate the direct business-like character of the Report and the similarity of the problems to those which confront the cities and towns of the Western World.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF  
Boston

## YOUR NEXT HOME

The Common Brick Manufacturers' Association has issued an attractive booklet bearing the above title consisting of photographs and plans of 60 houses, all of which are of houses that have actually been built and lived in. Copies of this booklet can be obtained by sending 10 cents in stamps to the Association at Cleveland.

## RECENT BOOKS AND REPORTS ON HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING \*

### ALBANY, NEW YORK.

Proposed Building Zone Ordinance. 18p. folded map. Albany, 1923.

### ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

City Planning Commission. Annual Report, 1922. 28p. maps, diagrams.  
Atlanta, The Commission, 1922.

### BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

Eighth Annual Report of the City Planning Board for the Year Ending  
January 31, 1922. 44p. maps. Boston, the Board, 1922.

Metropolitan Planning and Development in Boston and Its Environs.  
Report of Committee of Boston Chamber of Commerce. 32p. diagrams  
and maps. Boston, Chamber of Commerce, November 1922.

### CALIFORNIA.

Commission of Immigration and Housing—Ninth Annual Report, Janu-  
ary 9, 1923. 123p. illus. Sacramento, the State, 1923.

### CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

Studies on Building Height Limitations in Large Cities, with Special  
Reference to Conditions in Chicago. Proceedings of an Investigation  
conducted under the auspices of the Zoning Committee of the Chi-  
cago Real Estate Board. Compiled by Charles M. Nichols. Price  
\$2.60. 299p. illus. diagrams, folded map in colors. Chicago, the  
Board, 1923.

Tentative Report and Proposed Zoning Ordinance for the City of Chi-  
cago. January 5, 1923. 36p. illus. maps, diagrams. Chicago Zoning  
Commission, 163 West Washington Street.

Zoning Chicago. April 1922. 12p. illus. maps. Chicago Zoning Com-  
mission, 163 West Washington Street.

Zoning in the City of Chicago, by Charles B. Ball. 37p. illus. Chicago,  
Dept. of Health, 1923. (Reprint 25)

### CHILDREN'S BUREAU—U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

Child Labor and the Welfare of Children in an Anthracite Coal Mining  
District. Bureau Publication No. 106. p.48-63; Housing Conditions.  
Washington, Govt. Printing Office, 1922.

### CLEVELAND, OHIO.

Report of the Committee on City Plan of the Cleveland Chamber of  
Commerce, June 14, 1922. 16p. maps. Cleveland, the Chamber, 1922.

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\* This includes material received since July, 1922.



## DUBLIN, IRELAND.

Dublin of the Future. The New Town Plan, being the scheme awarded first Prize in the International Competition. By Patrick Abercrombie, Sydney Kelly and Arthur Kelly. 58 quarto pages. Price, boards, 21s. Numerous plates, illustrations and folded plans. Published by the Civics Institute of Ireland, 1922.

## ENGLAND.

Acquiring and Replanning Congested Areas. Paper read at the meeting of the Town Planning Institute, March 9, 1923, by L. C. Evans, with discussion. 26p. London, the Institute, 1923. (v.9, nos. 5 and 6)

(The) Administration of the Town Planning Duties of the Local Authorities. A supplement to "The Case for Town Planning". By Henry R. Aldridge, Secretary, National Housing and Town Planning Council. 95p. Price 8s. 6d. net. London, the Council, 1922.

(The) Betrayal of the Slums, by Dr. Christopher Addison, First Minister of Health. 128p. London, Herbert Jenkins, 1922.

Bournville Housing—A description of the housing schemes of Cadbury Bros. Ltd. and the Bournville Village Trust. Second Impression, with Revisions and Additions. 56p. illus. Price 6d. Bournville Works, Publication Department, May 1923.

Congested Areas. Paper read at the Meeting of the Town Planning Institute, May 4, 1923, by Professor S. D. Adshead, with discussion. London, the Institute, 1923. (v.9, no. 7)

(The) Doncaster Regional Planning Scheme. Report prepared for the Joint Committee by Patrick Abercrombie and T. H. Johnson. 93 quarto pages. illus. diagrams and folded maps. Price 10s. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1922.

George Cadbury, 1839-1922. Memorial Number of the Bournville Works Magazine. 64p. illus. Bournville, December 1922.

Home Conditions and the Intelligence of School Children, The Relation Between. Report of the Medical Research Council of the Privy Council. 28p. December 20, 1922. Price 1s. London, the Govt., 1922. (Special Report Series 74)

House of Commons. Housing, etc. (No. 2) Bill. 22p. April 11, 1923. Price 6d. London, the Govt., 1923. (Bill 82)

House of Commons. Housing, etc. (No. 2) Bill. (As Amended by Standing Committee A.) 29p. June 11, 1923. Price 9d. London, the Govt., 1923. (Bill 160)

House of Commons. Parliamentary Debates. Housing, etc. (No. 2) Bill. Proceedings before Standing Committee A. Twelve Days. May 8 to June 11, 1923. Price 6d. each. London, the Govt., 1923.

House of Commons. Rent and Mortgage Interest Restrictions Bill. 11p. May 30, 1923. Price 6d. London, the Govt., 1923. (Bill 154)

Housing Problem. A Statement of the Present Position. Report of the Housing Sub-Committee of the Consultative Committee of Women's Organizations. 52p. Price 1s. York Buildings, Adelphi, W. C. 2, London, April 1923.

ENGLAND (*Continued*).

- How to Get Houses, by George Hicks, Secretary, Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers. 13p. London, The Trades Union Congress and the Labor Party, 32 Eccleston Square, 1923.
- Labor-Saving Houses. A Book of Type Plans. National Building Guild, Ltd. 48p. illus. plans. Price 1s. 6d. London, the Guild, 1922(?).
- Letchworth Garden City. Special Number of Garden Cities and Town Planning, July, 1923. Price 1s. 3 Gray's Inn Place, London, W. C. 1.
- London County Council. Report for 1921. Vol. III, Public Health; Chap. XXVII, p.72-82; Housing. Price 2s. 6d. London, P. S. King and Son, 1922. (No. 2168)
- Ministry of Health. Final Reports of the Departmental Committee on the Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act 1920. 48p. Price 9d. net. London, the Govt., 1923 (Cmd. 1803)
- Ministry of Health. Housing, etc. (No. 2) Bill. Memorandum Explanatory of the Financial Provisions of the Bill. 4p. Price 2d. London, the Govt., 1923. (Cmd. 1855)
- Ministry of Health. Housing. Explanation to Local Authorities of the Housing, etc. (No. 2) Bill. 15p. April 27, 1923. Price 2d. London, the Govt., 1923. (Circular 388)
- Ministry of Health. Model Clauses for use in the Preparation of Town Planning Schemes. 64p. Price 1s. London, the Govt., February, 1923.
- Ministry of Health. Third Annual Report, 1921-1922. 166p. Price 6s. London, the Govt., 1922. (Cmd. 1713)
- Nottingham Housing Schemes. A Review of the First 2 Years' Progress of the Housing Schemes. By T. Cecil Howitt, Housing Architect and Surveyor. July 1919 to July 1921. 80p. illus. type plans and layout plans.
- (The) Relation of Health to Site and Use of Site. Paper read at the meeting of the Town Planning Institute, February 9, 1923, by Professor F. E. Wynne, with discussion. 14p. London, the Institute, 1923. (v.9, no. 4)
- (The) Smokeless City, by E. D. Simon and Marion Fitzgerald. 82p. London, Longmans Green & Co., 1922.
- (A) Speculative Builder's Opinion on the Housing Problem, by H. M. Grant, December 4, 1922. 15p.
- Speculative Building as Affecting the Housing Problem, by Walter Cook. 40p. The Builder, 4 Catherine St., Aldwych, W. C. 2, London, 1923.
- Sydney: Past, Present and Future. Paper read at the meeting of the Town Planning Institute, June 16, 1922, by J. J. C. Bradfield, with discussion. 31p. London, the Institute, 1922. (v.8, no. 9)
- Town Planning Institute. Presidential Address of H. V. Lanchester, November 10, 1922. 10p. London, the Institute, 1922. (v.9, no. 2)

## ENGLAND (*Continued*).

Town Planning Institute. Proceedings of Fourth Annual Conference at Manchester, October 12, 13 and 14, 1922. 22p. London, the Institute, 1922. (v.9, no. 1)

Towns and Town-Planning, Ancient and Modern, by T. Harold Hughes and E. A. Lamborn. pp.xii and 156. 90 illus. Price 15s. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1923.

(The) University in Relation to the Planning of the City. Paper read at the meeting of the Town Planning Institute, December 8, 1922, by Professor P. Abercrombie, with discussion. 28p. London, the Institute, 1922. (v.9, no. 3)

(The) Woman and the Little House, by M. L. Eyles. 167p. (Chapter II; Housing.) London, Grant Richards Ltd., 1922.

## FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS.

Report of the Fall River Planning Board; Report of Arthur A. Shurtleff, Town Planner. 43p. illus. plans *folio*. Boston, the Pinkham Press, 1922.

## FEDERATED MALAY STATES.

Town Planning and Development in the Federated Malay States. Preliminary Report and General Survey, with Recommendations, by Charles C. Reade, Government Town Planner. 30p. Federated Malay States, Govt. Press, 1922.

## FRANCE.

*Habitations à Bon Marché du Département de la Seine*. (Low Cost Dwellings in the Department of the Seine) by Henri Sellier. 44 Plates. Ch. Massin, *Editeur*, 51 Rue des Ecoles, Paris.

## ILLINOIS.

Proposed Amendment to the Illinois Zoning Enabling Act, by Edward M. Bassett. 12p. Chicago Real Estate Board, 1923.

Report of the Illinois Building Investigation Commission, John T. Dailey, Chairman. 109p. Springfield, the State, 1923.

## NEW YORK, N. Y.

Maps and Diagrams showing present conditions, March, 1923. 39 quarto pages. maps. Prepared by the Physical Survey, Plan of New York and Its Environs. Price 25 cents. (P. N. Y. 3)

Report of Progress, Plan of New York and Its Environs. May 1922 to February 1923. 67p. (P. N. Y. 2)

## PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

Housing in Philadelphia, by Bernard J. Newman. Report for 1921 of the Philadelphia Housing Association. 52p. illus. diag. Philadelphia, the Assn., 1922.

## PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA.

Final Report on the Zoning Ordinance, submitted to the Council by the Department of City Planning, January 22, 1923. 28p.

## PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND.

(The) Providence Zone Plan; Report outlining a tentative zone plan for Providence, by Robert Whitten. 31p. illus. maps. 1923.

## SCOTLAND.

Aberdeen, Improvement of Insanitary Areas. Report by the Housing Committee. 14p. Town Clerk, Aberdeen, December 27, 1922.

Edinburgh, The Housing of the Poor. 16p. Edinburgh. Macniven & Wallace, 138 Princes Street, 1922.

## SPAIN.

*Instituto de Reformas Sociales*. Informational Pamphlets (in Spanish): No. 1, What is a Low-Cost Dwelling? 22p. 1922; No. 2, Government Aid for Construction of Low Cost Dwellings. 27p. 1922; No. 3, The Functions of Municipalities in relation to the Housing Problem. 41p. illus. 1923. Pontejos 2, Madrid, Spain.

International Conference on Garden Cities and Town Planning (Paris, October, 1922). Report of Proceedings, in Spanish. 38p. Issued by the *Instituto de Reformas Sociales*, Pontejos 2, Madrid, Spain, 1923.

International Garden Cities and Town Planning Conference, (London, March, 1922). Report of Proceedings, in Spanish. 52p. Issued by the *Instituto de Reformas Sociales*, Pontejos 2, Madrid, Spain, 1922.

(The) Law of December 10, 1921, on Low-Cost Dwelling Construction, with Regulations for its Application, July 8, 1922. 195p. In Spanish. Issued by the *Instituto de Reformas Sociales*. Pontejos 2, Madrid, Spain, 1922.

## SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS.

City Plan for Springfield. Technical Advisory Corporation. 59p. illus. maps. New York, the Corporation, May, 1922.

## UNITED STATES.

Better Homes in America. Plan Book for Demonstration Week, October 9 to 14, 1922. 53p. New York, the Delineator, 1922.

Citizenship—A Practical Textbook in Community Civics, by Ella Cannon Levis, M.A. (Chapter 8 deals with "Public Regulation of Buildings" and Chapter 12 with "City Planning") 470p. illus. New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1923.

City Planning Conference. Proceedings of 15th National Meeting at Baltimore, April 30, May 1 and 2, 1923. 221p. Baltimore, 1923.

City Planning and the Realtor. Paper read by Henry M. Dickman, Secretary, City Planning Commission, Evansville, at the Indiana City Planning Conference, Feb. 14, 1923. Mimeograph No. 3, Engineering Extension Bulletins, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.

Concrete Around the Home. 31p. illus. Chicago, Portland Cement Assn., 1922.

Concrete Basements and Foundations. 19p. illus. Chicago, Portland Cement Association, 1922.



UNITED STATES (*Continued*).

- Farm Cities Corporation of America. Descriptive Booklet. Includes plans for proposed farm city, Pender Co., North Carolina, by John Nolen. 16p. plan. 244 Madison Ave., New York, 1922.
- Forty Years of Landscape Architecture. The Professional Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted. Volume I, Early years and experiences. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Theodora Kimball, Editors. 131p. portraits and facsimiles. Price \$2.50. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922.
- (The) Law of City Planning and Zoning, by Frank Backus Williams. 738p. Price \$5.00. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1922.
- (A) Manual of Concrete Masonry Construction. 32p. illus. diagrams. Chicago, Portland Cement Assn., 1923.
- Modern Homes for City Dwellers, by Henry Wright, the Home Building Service, Inc., St. Louis, 24p. illus.
- Our Housing Problem and its Relation to City Planning. Paper read by Prof. Leonard Smith, at the Indiana City Planning Conference, February 14, 15, 1923. Mimeograph No. 4, Engineering Extension Bulletins, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.
- Ownership of Homes, U. S. Census Office. William C. Hunt. 45p. diagram. Washington, D. C., Govt. Printing Office, 1923.
- Place of the Beautiful in the City Plan, by John Nolen. 23p. illus. National Conference on City Planning, 130 East 22nd St., New York, 1922.
- (A) Plain Talk on Beautiful Homes. 16p. illus. Chicago, Portland Cement Assn., 1923.
- (The) Planning of the Modern City, by Nelson P. Lewis. Second Edition revised. 457p. illus. plans, diagrams. Price \$5. New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1923.
- Planning of New York and Environs. Paper read at the Meeting of the Town Planning Institute (England), April 20, 1923, by Thomas Adams, with discussion. London, the Institute, 1923. (v.9, no. 7)
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# Housing Betterment

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## NATIONAL HOUSING CONFERENCE AT PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA is to be the scene of a great National Housing Conference called by the National Housing Association in coöperation with other national organizations to be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, December 5, 6 and 7.

This Conference is most timely. The blockade on Housing still exists in all its intensity and with all its rigors. For, practically no houses are being built today for the workingman in most parts of the country. The reason for this is not far to seek, as it still costs anywhere from \$5,000 to \$8,000 to build a \$3,000 house. Dwellings at such cost are beyond the purchasing power of the workingman, as he would have to pay a rent of \$60 a month or the equivalent of it for such a house; \$35 a month is about the maximum of what even the skilled mechanic can afford to pay.

The reason for this situation is to be found in the High Cost of Labor, the High Cost of Materials and the High Cost of Money. Each one of these three factors is vital to the situation.

Is there any way out of the present difficulty? What does Labor want? Are all workers in the building trade to be paid \$25 a day, the amount, it is stated, that plasterers and bricklayers are now getting; and if so, how can workingmen's houses be built that a workingman can afford to pay rent for?

Similarly, is Capital profiteering? It is claimed that the bankers are charging, in the guise of "commissions" and "premiums," excessive rates of interest for money loaned for building operations, in some cases amounting to as much as 25% premium in addition to the normal rate of interest.

To what extent is the present blockade caused by such practices and how can the great banking interests throughout the country aid in the resumption once more of the construction of dwelling houses for workingmen?

Is it true that banks are refusing to lend their funds for this class of construction and that investment of the great capital of the country is being diverted into other channels?

Is there a combine among the manufacturers of building materials by which prices are controlled? Or is the high cost of materials, due merely to the workings of supply and demand?

### IS LABOR PROFITEERING?

What does Labor want? Does it want a basic wage which will make impossible the building of houses for workingmen? Or would labor be content, as it was a few years ago, with reasonable compensation provided it could be assured of continuity of employment throughout the year, and not be subject, as it is now, to the vagaries of seasonal employment?

Is it true that Labor seeks to create a monopoly of labor supply by shutting off immigration and by limiting the number of apprentices that will be taken into the Unions in the building trades, as has been charged frequently?

All of these questions will be discussed at the Philadelphia Housing Conference by the men who are most competent to discuss them—by leaders in their respective fields.

Samuel Untermyer, the distinguished New York attorney whose reputation is nation-wide and who has rendered such yeoman service to the cause of housing, as counsel to the Lockwood Legislative Committee of New York, will on the evening of December 6th, discuss the whole situation in the building trade under the topic of "Who Is Responsible for the Housing Shortage?" "Is There Something Rotten In Denmark?"

There is no one in the country who has so fearlessly exposed the evil practices in the building industry, both among employers and among labor, as Mr. Untermyer and the greatest interest is manifested in what he will have to say on this occasion.

Replying to the charges which have been made against Labor, it is expected that Samuel Gompers, the President of the American Federation of Labor, will be present at the Conference at its first great evening meeting on Wednesday, December 5th, and discuss the subject of: "What Labor Wants?" In addition to

Mr. Gompers on that evening Mr. Hugh Frayne, for over 20 years the general organizer of the American Federation of Labor in New York City will set forth Labor's Position on the Housing Question.

### SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT A FACTOR

Mr. W. Stanley Parkér, for many years Secretary of the American Institute of Architects, a distinguished architect of Boston and a member of Secretary Hoover's Committee on Seasonal Employment will discuss the question of "Irregularity of Employment As a Factor in High Labor Cost."

What the practical men who are building houses think of the situation and of Labor's position will be set forth by General R. C. Marshall, the Managing Director of the Associated General Contractors of America at Washington. General Marshall's war work commanded universal commendation and there is no one in the contracting field who can speak with greater authority or from a more practical point of view. General Marshall is going to discuss on the evening of December 5th at this Labor meeting already alluded to the question of: "How Labor Can Reduce the Cost of Houses" and at the same time is going to point out the failings of capital and the abuses that exist in connection with the loaning of money at the present time for building operations.

The part that the bankers can play in Lifting the Blockade on Housing will be set forth on Thursday morning, December 6th, at 10 o'clock by Mr. William E. Knox, Vice-President of the American Bankers Association and the President of the Bowery Savings Bank of New York. Mr. Knox, from his vast experience, will discuss the question of How Savings Banks Can Aid Housing and will emphasize the factors which enter into the placing of loans for dwelling purposes, especially the making of first mortgages.

In many parts of the country there are many workingmen who would like to build their own homes and own them if they had capital, but although they are good workers and steady men, because of illness or because of large family or of limited resources, or for a variety of reasons, they have not a sufficient reserve of capital even to make a first payment on the building of a house, such as would be required by the ordinary lenders of money and yet they have an asset which the elder Mr. Morgan stated was the basis of all business, viz., personal credit. They are "good" for the amount.



## LENDING MONEY ON PERSONALITY

How can such men be properly housed and be encouraged to become home owners? There is no reason in the world so far as anyone can see why it should not be made possible for such men to build their own homes especially when the building of such homes can be combined with life insurance, thus protecting the lenders of the money in the event of the sudden death of the man in question. Arthur J. Morris, President of the Morris Plan Company and Vice-President of the Industrial Finance Corporation of New York, the head of a chain of "Morris Banks" distributed throughout the country which make a special feature of loaning money to individuals upon what is known as "two-name" paper, will discuss the possibility of "Selling Homes on Personal Credit" outlining methods by which the Morris Plan can be extended to the building of homes by workers thus situated, especially where the worker's employer is anxious to encourage the worker to stay put in that community and knows that he is steady and reliable and wants to reduce his labor turnover.

While the high cost of labor and the high cost of money are important factors in the present blockade on Housing, probably a greater factor is the high cost of building material. How can the cost of building materials be reduced? Sullivan W. Jones, State Architect of New York, has made special studies of this question, and is going to present to the Conference at Philadelphia a plan by which the cost of building materials can be reduced.

## NEW METHODS IN BUILDING

Two years ago there was established in the Bureau of Standards of the U. S. Department of Commerce at Washington by legislative act a new Division of Building and Housing. John M. Gries, the chief of that Division will tell the Conference the possibilities of reducing the cost of building materials through developing new processes, new materials and especially new methods.

It is often charged that the method of laying bricks for instance, and that all the methods employed in an ordinary building operation have not advanced one step from the time of King Tut-ahnk-amen. Whether this is so or not, it is true that there are great possibilities in reducing the cost of building by new methods and especially by the development of new materials.



Mr. Gries with his wealth of experience and knowledge of this subject will explain the steps that have already been taken by the Department of Commerce under Mr. Hoover's direction, to develop new materials and through research work to bring about the standardization of materials, thus doing away with the tremendous waste which has existed for years past, not only in the building trades, but in all of the auxiliary trades that have any relation to the construction industry.

### ANTIQUATED BUILDING LAWS

Four other methods of reducing the cost of housing are being brought to public notice at this Conference. In many cities there are unwise requirements in local building laws, requiring walls to be thicker than necessary, requiring a waste of building materials and adding to costs in various ways. Ira H. Woolson, the leading Fire Prevention expert of the country and an authority on the subject of Building Codes, Chairman of Mr. Hoover's Committee on Building Codes, will tell the Conference how the cost of housing can be reduced by eliminating the waste caused by unnecessary building law requirements.

Similarly, in the plumbing industry there is great waste of material and unnecessary expense incurred by unnecessary plumbing code requirements.

Most of the plumbing codes of the country, like the building codes, have been established very often by rule of thumb method and without any regard to the performance of materials in actual operation. George C. Whipple, the country's leading Sanitary Expert and Professor at Harvard University and Chairman of Secretary Hoover's Committee on Plumbing Codes, will similarly point out to the Conference how the cost of housing can be reduced by eliminating unnecessary plumbing code requirements.

Until recently the average small dwelling has been built without the aid of the architect and has not had the benefit of the skill, experience and knowledge that the architect brings to his profession. Recently there has come into practice, in a few instances, the utilization of the architects' experience and services in the designing of small houses intended for the ordinary wage-earner, what may be termed "The Average Man". A leading architect will explain how the cost of housing can be reduced by the proper designing of houses and what the architect's opportunity is in this direction.

Another way by which the cost of housing can be reduced is by cheapening the land cost through intelligent preparation of the land for building purposes by the city officials, in advance of the actual subdivision of the property and the placing on it of dwellings. Very often this is neglected and sewers are not constructed, streets not opened, sidewalks not laid and transit facilities not provided in sections adjoining great cities where the undeveloped land makes it a logical step for the city to extend itself that distance in the near future.

Bernard J. Newman, the Director of the Philadelphia Housing Association will discuss at this Conference the means by which the cost of housing can be reduced through the engineer's intelligent development of land and by its necessary improvement in advance of actual building.

### THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE HOUSING SHORTAGE

All the time that the housing shortage is existing conditions are getting worse; for, the population does not stand still. Young people are still getting married and families are being started. A question which everyone asks is "If no houses are being built for working people, what are the working people doing?" "Where are they living?" "They are not homeless. We do not find great numbers of people in the city streets, or camping out in tents in the parks. They are being housed somewhere." The answer is that "They are doubling up." And that two families—sometimes three—or even four—are now living where one family lived before. The social consequences of the housing shortage are most serious. This enforced overcrowding offers a real health menace through the opportunities that it affords for ready spread of contact diseases.

It is expected that U. S. Senator Royal S. Copeland, former Health Commissioner of New York, will speak on the subject of "The Social Consequences of the Housing Shortage" at Philadelphia at the luncheon meeting on Thursday, December 6th, unless his legislative duties in Congress make it impossible for him to get away. Senator Copeland has made a nation-wide study of this subject and is probably better fitted to deal with it than any other man in the United States.

In addition to the menace of these conditions from the point of view of health, there is a very serious menace from the point of view of social welfare; for the living under such cramped

conditions breeds social discontent and is a very serious factor in our industrial situation. There are also grave moral dangers resulting from this enforced overcrowding. All of these questions Senator Copeland it is expected will discuss at Philadelphia.

### RENT CONTROL LAWS

One result of the housing shortage is the increase in rent that is so serious a factor in great cities like New York and Philadelphia and which is felt throughout all parts of the country.

It is a vicious circle. The housing shortage creates high rents and in their turn the high rents create a housing shortage.

In some states because of the great discontent caused by the increase of rent, notably in great metropolitan centers like New York City with its 6,000,000 population, in answer to public outcry the legislature has found it desirable to pass Rent Control Laws. These laws enacted originally to cope with an emergency have been extended from year to year as the public have demanded that rents be controlled. In New York rents are practically fixed by law. Landlords are prohibited from increasing their rents under certain conditions and it is left to the minor courts to determine what is a fair rent in each case. In addition landlords are prevented from dispossessing tenants and our minor courts are flooded with hundreds of thousands of cases of disputes between landlords and tenants. At the luncheon meeting on Friday, December 7th, at the Philadelphia Conference this subject of "Do We Need Rent Control Laws Permanently in America" will be discussed and it is expected also that the idea of Conciliation Courts, an application of the principle of arbitration to landlord and tenant disputes, will be suggested as a way out of the present situation.

### WHAT ABOUT ZONING?

Finally, the Conference plans to discuss the Relation of Zoning to Housing, for rightly the projectors of this Conference believe that it is unwise to stimulate large scale production of houses throughout different parts of the country if such houses are to be placed in disadvantageous parts of our cities and in a short time cease to be of value for residence purposes.

Zoning, that great national movement which has spread like wildfire throughout the country, controls this situation by estab-



lishing different districts for different purposes in different parts of a city.

The general public does not perhaps realize that today 22,000,000 people are living in Zoned cities.

Is the Zoning movement one that should be fostered, or is it unwise? The city of Philadelphia, where the Conference is to be held, has been considering a Zoning ordinance for the past three years and Philadelphia is one of the few great cities in the country that has failed to adopt a Zoning Ordinance. This has been due very largely to the active opposition of one or two individuals representing financial interests in Philadelphia who believe that their interests will be adversely affected by the proposed ordinance. But the people of Philadelphia, it is believed, are not likely to permit a great public question of this kind to be determined by the private interests of a few individuals. Therefore it is proposed to place before the Conference the experience of the entire country, especially the experience of those communities where Zoning has been in practice for some time as to whether Zoning has developed the objections which its opponents in Philadelphia claim, and exactly how it has worked out in practice.

At the session on Friday afternoon, December 7th, at 3 o'clock there is to be a great symposium on this subject and persons from different parts of the country will discuss the subject under the following heads: What the Realtor Thinks of Zoning, What the Banker Thinks of Zoning, What the Architect Thinks of Zoning, What the City Engineer Thinks of Zoning, and finally What the Citizen Thinks of Zoning.

Harvey W. Corbett, distinguished New York architect who has made a study of the way Zoning regulations have worked out in practice in New York City, will discuss before the Conference the subject of "What the Architect Thinks of Zoning" and will illustrate by lantern slides the way that the Zoning regulations have worked out in New York City, especially with reference to the height of buildings and the ingenious scheme of "setbacks" by which buildings of excessive height are permitted, but under conditions that do not work to the detriment of the community.

Lawson Purdy, for over 10 years Chairman of the Board of Taxes and Assessments of New York City and President of the National City Planning Conference, will discuss "What the Citizen Thinks of Zoning". Mr. Purdy from his viewpoint as Chairman of the Board of Taxes and Assessments and an expert on



real estate values can speak with especial authority on this great subject.

### ARE OUR CITIES UNLIVABLE?

The Conference is to end on Friday evening, December 7th, with a great banquet at the Hotel Adelphia. The theme of the banquet meeting is to be Regional Planning, or "The City of the Future" and four speakers from four principal cities of the country, namely, New York, Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia, will discuss this question of "Are Our Great Cities Becoming Unlivable?"

Has it become necessary and will it become necessary in the future in other communities to burrow like the mole underground and build streets underneath the present streets? That is what is being suggested for New York and for other cities because of the great traffic congestion in the streets, not only in the roadways, but even on the sidewalks. Are our cities really becoming unlivable?

At this banquet Thomas Adams, distinguished British Town Planner and now the expert head of the staff of the Committee on Plan of New York and Its Environs, will discuss what "New York Faces". Mr. Adams will outline the problem which confronts his Committee and the methods which that Committee is employing in making its epoch-making study of the Region around New York comprising an area of over 55,000 square miles, a study which includes every phase of the development of the future city—its physical aspects, its industrial aspects, its economic aspects, its social aspects.

Similarly, the problem which faces the city of Chicago, the problem which faces the city of Boston and the problem which faces Philadelphia, will be discussed by other speakers competent to consider the problems of those cities from the point of view of the intelligent development and planning of the great Region which surrounds each one of these communities.

It will be seen that this Housing Convention is of vast importance to every citizen interested in the welfare of America and in the intelligent development of our cities.

While the Conference is being held under the auspices of the National Housing Association of which Robert W. de Forest of New York is President and Lawrence Veiller, Secretary, it is being called in coöperation with the following national organizations, all of whom are in one way or another vitally affected by

the present housing shortage: The American Construction Council, the United States Department of Commerce, Associated General Contractors of America, American Civic Association, National Municipal League, American Federation of Labor, National Conference on City Planning, National Association of Builders' Exchanges, the U. S. Department of Labor, U. S. League of Local Building and Loan Associations and the National Builders' Supply Association.

All sessions of the Conference will be held at the Hotel Adelphia, 13th & Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. The Conference begins at a luncheon meeting on Wednesday, December 5th, and ends with a banquet on Friday evening, December 7th. There will be two sessions each morning (except on Wednesday) and a luncheon meeting each day as well as an afternoon session on Wednesday and Friday. On Thursday afternoon the delegates will be taken in private motors to inspect the more interesting of recent improved housing developments in and near Philadelphia. The general public is invited to all sessions of the Conference. No tickets are required.

Every community that faces a housing problem will find it advantageous to send delegates to this Conference. "You can't afford to miss it."

Copies of the Preliminary Programme can be obtained from the National Housing Association, 105 East 22d Street, New York City.

## THE SHORTAGE IN PARIS

Dispatches from Paris indicate the continuance of a serious housing shortage, if one can judge by the fact that the newspapers carry advertisements offering anywhere from 1,000 to 3,000 francs to a janitor who will find an apartment for the advertiser.

The reasons for this state of affairs are said to be due to the fact that the Rent Control Laws have run their course and landlords are seeking as large a return on their investment as possible. It is stated that rents have doubled, tripled and quadrupled since the Armistice and that flats which were renting at sums representing about \$20 a year are now bringing \$1,000 a year. The situation is complicated by the fact that because of high hotel prices strangers coming to Paris are looking for apartments, both furnished and unfurnished.

As indicative of the extreme situation that exists, it is reported that a newly elected President of the Senate, a post which entitles a holder to live in the Senate Building, had to wait for four months to move in because his predecessor couldn't move out until he could find a place in which to live.

## DEATH OF A FRENCH PIONEER

Word comes to us from Paris of the death on October 7th of Emile Cacheux, one of France's pioneer housing reformers, at the age of 79.

M. Cacheux played a most important part in the movement for better housing in France and for years through a long life gave of himself to the cause of better housing. He was actively interested for a long time in the leading movements for better housing in France and held important positions in the leading organizations devoted to that cause.

His death creates a very serious gap in the ranks of the housing workers of the world, and he will be mourned by all those who had the honor of knowing him.

## THE REBIRTH OF FRANCE

There is probably no part of the Devastated Regions, not even Verdun itself, which has a greater interest for Americans than the district around Rheims. It is delightful to learn therefore that that much harrassed city which was the scene of such utter desolation until a few months ago, has like the Phoenix, risen from the ashes and that a charming and delightful Garden Village is now nearing completion on the outskirts of that city.

Originally conceived before the War by a group of philanthropists who determined to fight the falling birthrate by better living environment, at the time of the War 36 houses had been built and 80 were in course of construction. Two-thirds of the former and all of latter were destroyed in the bombardment of Rheims.

Notwithstanding this experience, the projectors of the scheme after the War proceeded to carry out the scheme but on an enlarged and more complete scale. A plan for the construction of two Garden Villages, one of 600 houses, the other of 400 houses, to be situated on the outskirts of the town in healthy districts, was drawn up. Notwithstanding the many difficulties that were encountered, including the modification of the existing housing



laws, the negotiation of a loan, the obtaining of the land for the development and the necessary permits by the municipality, success has crowned the scheme and toward the close of the year 1920 the building of the first Garden Village known as the *Cité Jardin du Chemin-Vert* was begun and was completed in less than a year.

This Garden Village is now inhabited by 3500 people of whom 2200 are children. It covers an area of about 75 acres, each house occupying about 60 square yards, each garden about 360 square yards and the remaining space being taken up by playgrounds, squares and open spaces. There are 15 different types of houses but the majority contain 4 rooms, a wash-house, water-closet, attic, cellar and an outhouse in the garden for poultry and rabbits.

The gardens are enclosed by white cement railings imitating the wooden fences around the fields in Normandy. Ivy, clematis and climbing roses are planted under the walls of the houses and trees along the main avenues, while a plot of grass separates each house from the road.

Some of the houses in addition contain a large well lighted studio with electrical fittings where crafts such as mechanical engineering, woodwork, spinning and millinery can be carried on at home. The necessary shops for the conveniences of living in such a community have been opened including a large steam bakery which provides bread for the entire community.

In addition to the houses, there are a number of important community enterprises. One of these is called the *Maison de l'Enfance*, or Children's House. This building contains pre-natal and baby welfare clinics and milk stations, a crèche and day nursery, all equipped according to the latest ideas of child welfare. Children up to the age of 10 years are looked after by the Society free of charge during the fortnight following another birth in the family. The first floor of the Children's House is reserved for courses in housekeeping, cookery, sewing, laundry, knitting and all sorts of housecrafts.

Another important building which stands at the head of the public square around which are grouped a number of attractive cottages is the *Maison pour Tous*, or Everyman's House. While this building is still unfinished it is rapidly nearing completion and when finished will contain a library, a club room, a dispensary, a recreation hall, meeting rooms, gymnasium and shower



baths. A Catholic church is now in course of construction and will soon be completed and a site has been reserved for a Protestant Church if there should be a sufficient number of people of that faith requiring one. School buildings and an open air school for 1250 children are soon to be commenced.

One of the interesting features of this attractive Garden Village lies in the fact that the rents charged are to be proportionately reduced according to the number of children in the family. But even these rents are expected to be sufficient for the proper maintenance of the buildings and the roads. The social welfare work is naturally to be supported from other sources. The Society projecting this attractive Garden Village has limited its dividends to 4%. The Garden Village is attractively situated on high ground. From their windows the inhabitants can look out to the south over vine-covered hills and to the north over the forts of Brimont, Berru and Nogent from which the Germans bombarded their city for four long years.

Today this is a Garden Village of children; they flower everywhere and the streets overflow with their rosy faces and re-echo to their merry voices. Each month on an average there are 10 births as compared with 3 deaths.

If France is seeking a solution of its decreasing birthrate, a problem which has given those responsible for the government of France much concern for many years past, let them consider this effort at Rheims. Similar experiments repeated all over France will eliminate the falling birthrate as a problem of the French Republic.

## A FRENCH MAYOR AIDS THE DISPOSSESSED

The mayor of the French town of *Livry-Gargan* has hit upon a novel means of protecting a group of citizens threatened with expulsion from their homes, who, by reason of the extreme shortage of houses have been unable to find other shelter.

It appears that the landlord had served dispossession notices to take effect at a certain date. The Mayor then issued a decree, formally prohibiting all persons from placing upon the sidewalks or streets any furniture or household goods, utensils or effects whatever, belonging to families dispossessed by reason of a court decision. The police commissioner and his agents were ordered to take measures necessary in order to prevent, in such case, any act that might disturb the peace.

This decree will, it is expected, make dispossessing of tenants practically impossible. The prefect of the Department, to whom it was submitted in accordance with French law, has offered no objection, nor has he vetoed or suspended its execution as he might have done had he judged it illegal. The decree is based on the police power, certain sections of the French law providing that the Mayor as executive of the municipal police, which has for its object "the good order, the safety, and the health of the public", may provide for "the safety and convenience of passage in streets, places and other public ways".

## HOUSING AND THE FRENCH BIRTH RATE

M. Paul Strauss, Minister of Health and Public Aid of France, has recently addressed a communication to French Prefects linking up the shortage of housing with the declining marriage and birth rate in France and urging whatever Communal aid can be employed be directed toward providing new dwellings.

## RENT CONTROL IN FRANCE

An interesting account of how the rent control laws work in France appeared in a recent issue of *Le Quotidien* of Paris in an article by M. Pierre Dormoy, an acknowledged authority on this subject.

According to M. Dormoy most of the rent restriction laws have now lapsed as they were framed to meet special emergencies. A tenant who has been threatened with eviction by his landlord is no longer entitled to an adjournment of his case as a matter of right, nor is there any longer a limit imposed by law to the amount of increase in the rent that a landlord may make. On the other hand every person is entitled to an appeal to the lower courts, the judge being given full discretion to settle the dispute.

The system works about as follows:

Where an owner has demanded an increase in the rent and the tenant refuses to pay it, the owner serves the tenant with a dispossess notice. Under the present law the tenant is allowed 20 days in which to make an alternative offer. If in that time the owner and the tenant do not come to a joint agreement the question is referred to the court which may grant an adjournment of a year. The amount of the increase of rent is also left to the court for determination.

In general, extensions of time of a year are granted while increases in rent vary between 40 and 100%. Aliens, disorderly tenants and those who either will not or cannot pay the increase determined by the arbitrators are excluded from the benefits of this legislation.

If the owner wishes to occupy the premises himself he is entitled to possession, but in this matter, as in all others, full discretion is left to the court so as to prevent abuse.

Under the terms of the law passed this summer an extension of time of six months instead of three in cases of dispossess notices is granted automatically.

## BRUSSELS OVERFLOWS INTO THE SUBURBS

Recent information received from Brussels indicates that that city is suffering from the housing shortage in common with all other cities of the world.

Although the population of the center of the town has decreased by as many as 22,000 persons during the decade ending 1920, the suburbs surrounding Brussels have showed a proportionate increase of population. This was naturally to be expected, for with the demand for houses and the cessation of building activities during the war the houses in the center of the town have naturally become greatly in demand and have become too expensive to be used as dwellings and families have therefore moved out to make room for commercial houses and office buildings.

In Greater Brussels the number of houses increased from 1910 to 1920 by 6.35% and the number of families living separately in the same period by 13.49%, though the population itself increased by only 4.37%. The number of families per house was 242 for every 100 houses in 1910 as against 258 per 100 houses in 1920. In Brussels itself opposite tendencies have been at work. For, though the number of houses there has diminished in this period, the proportion of persons living in them has even diminished still more, viz., by 7.73%.

In Greater Brussels room overcrowding has slightly increased. In 1910 there were 74,402 lodgings with 314,287 occupants making 43% of the population. In 1920 74,826 families are inadequately housed, the definition of "inadequate housing" being that there was more than one person per room.



In the town itself on the contrary there are 2,000 less families inadequately housed than there were in 1910, but the figure is still high, reaching 42% of the population.

The smaller houses are much more overcrowded than previously. Taking the whole area of Greater Brussels, two-thirds of the dwellings consist of one, two or three rooms. Two-thirds of the population live in these restricted surroundings.

A very interesting feature of this development lies in the fact that the further away the district is from the center of the city, the greater influx there is of new families, both of the working and lower middle classes.

It is in these suburban localities that the housing crisis is at its worst and where its effect is most disastrous. Young families are obliged to live in conditions of overcrowding which must have a serious effect on the health of the nation.

## CAN THE WORKINGMAN BUILD HIS OWN HOUSE?

One of the interesting subjects discussed at the Conference of national Societies for the Construction of Workingmen's Dwellings which was held this summer in Brussels was the question raised as to whether the workingman himself with the assistance of his family and friends could construct his own house.

At this Conference it was pointed out that in country districts farmers' families and people of small means, especially laborers, are building houses for themselves using local materials and under the guidance and direction of the village mason. In this way the cost of labor which for many housing enterprises amounts to 50% of the total expense is thus cut in two. By reducing this item the interest charge is also reduced. In such cases the problem is comparatively easy of solution. Here, as the best material to use, concrete seems to be the one most favored.

A number of other interesting questions were discussed at this Conference. One of these was How to Stimulate Private Initiative to Construct Low Priced Homes for the Working People Once More. Baron Tibbaut pointed out that the housing problem cannot be solved by the use of public powers or official organizations alone and that its solution depends upon the coöperation of private enterprise and the personal effort of those who wish to get homes for themselves but who need to be guided and encouraged in this effort.



It is pointed out that the private builder in Belgium has no thought of building at the present time owing to the abnormal cost of materials, labor and building sites.

There seemed to be a general agreement at the Conference that the experience of building and loan associations seemed to indicate that the desire to own a home was spreading among the working people of the country, but that one of the chief obstacles to the further development of this idea was the unnecessary red tape which has to be unwound in order to take advantage of the provisions of existing law. Suggestions were made which it was hoped would result in simplifying this situation.

Another live question discussed at this Conference was how to keep labor in rural districts. It was pointed out on the one hand that young married people cannot lay the foundations of a family in the country because they cannot find a suitable dwelling and are therefore obliged to flock to the towns and villages and there take lodgings where they add to the demand for housing accommodation and intensify the problem there.

In addition, the abnormal attraction of high wages in the cities and villages, especially in the devastated regions where reconstruction work is going on, tends still further to depopulate the rural communities.

The Conference was of the opinion that the best way of keeping the rural sections inhabited was to increase the housing accommodations and to make home ownership easy, pointing out that the instinct of home ownership is the most powerful bond that ties the worker to the land, and that the dream of creating for himself an independent position by becoming the owner of his modest holdings stimulates him to prodigious effort and economy, and that the country therefore as a whole has a great stake in strengthening this faith.

M. Lepreux, Vice President of the National Bank, who presided at the Conference, pointed out that one of the purposes of the Conference was to try to find some means by which private enterprise might be stimulated to resume building operations and thus relieve the Government from the chief burden of meeting the housing shortage. He pointed out that the financial situation of the national Government was such that it could not longer continue to bear alone the burdens involved in the responsibility for the solution of the housing problem.

## HOUSING IN THE NETHERLANDS\*

It was the good fortune of Holland that she escaped being drawn into the devastating vortex of the world war. It is the great merit of Holland that she took advantage of her peaceful state and unimpaired finances to inaugurate and carry on a great programme of social reform and human conservation, which will be reflected for years to come in lower death rates, healthier children and happier homes. The Dutch are a practical people, not easily stampeded into hasty action, and not easily turned aside when they have once decided upon their course. Their housing programme is not an emergency measure, hastily adopted—not a flash in the pan resulting from popular clamor and the post-war housing shortage. It is a deliberate policy, worked out after years of thought, discussion and careful experiment on not too large a scale.

In 1901 Holland passed the most complete and compact all-around housing laws that any country has yet put on its statute books. It touches all sides of housing, restrictive and constructive. On the restrictive side it establishes minimum standards of light, cubic air space and sanitation. It provides for the closing of unfit houses and for the clearance of slum areas. On the constructive side it provides credit for building workingmen's homes to the extent of 100%, on an at-cost basis. That is to say the national government will lend the whole construction cost, for a period of 50 years, to municipalities wishing to build working class dwellings, or to approved housing societies guaranteed by their municipalities. The rate of interest is the actual rate at which the government can borrow money on the Amsterdam exchange at the date of the agreement. In this most important provision of the act it will be seen that no subsidy is involved. There is still another source of credit,—Postal Savings Bank deposits, which play a useful, though a limited, role.

Town Planning is obligatory on all communes with over 10,000 inhabitants, and the plan must be revised every 10 years. Administration is vested in a board of three with a paid secretary, which

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\* By permission of The Architectural Forum this extract from Mrs. Woods' forthcoming book "Housing Progress in Western Europe, E. P. Dutton & Co., is reprinted because of its very great interest for our readers.—Editor.

passes on all loans. There are provincial and local housing authorities, and the slothful ones can be compelled to act by those higher up. The Housing Societies played a much more important part in the early years than the municipalities, but the logic of events has worked the other way, and though the Societies are as active as ever—indeed more so—the City Housing Departments are nearly everywhere outstripping them. In Amsterdam, where the Societies have reached their greatest development, they are still in the lead, but the Housing Department is catching up.

Dutch Housing Societies are, as elsewhere, of two sharply distinguished kinds—the philanthropic and co-operative. The latter kind in Holland is always a *tenants'* society. Home ownership is not an issue. The little that has been done in that way has been with the aid of loans from the Postal Savings Bank. In the villages and among the farmers more than half the families own their homes, whereas in cities of over 100,000 inhabitants only 61½% of the dwellings are owned by the occupants.

It is generally conceded that there are too many small co-operative housing societies in Holland—something over 2,000, I believe. It would be better in many ways (and certainly easier for the City Housing Departments, which have to supervise them) if the co-operators could be induced to coalesce into a reasonable number of strong organizations.

Work proceeded methodically along these lines until the increasing building costs due to the war, which had stopped commercial building by 1915, brought the Housing Societies also to a standstill two years later. In 1919 a temporary policy of subsidy was adopted, the burden being divided between the municipalities and the national government under which more than 100,000 small homes of excellent quality have been built. Payment of subsidy is conditioned on the charging of a "fair rent", which in Holland is officially held to be one-sixth or one-seventh of the family income.

The Dutch prefer single-family houses where practicable, but the exaggerated cost of land on 30-foot piling makes it impossible to house the people of Amsterdam in this manner excepting in a few outlying districts. One of these lies to the north of the harbor, where a municipal ordinance forbids structures of more than 2½ stories. Here the Housing Department has erected an extensive Garden Suburb with 1½-story brick or brick and frame cottages in long rows, according to the Dutch custom, with little flower gardens in front, and often climbing roses over the doors,



but with no vegetable gardens behind, because of the cost of the land. Most of these cottages have five rooms. All have sewer-connected toilets, running water and electric lights. The roofs are of red tile, and the woodwork around the doors and windows is painted in bright, cheerful colors.

One notes in Holland a complete absence of shutters. This is an economy, for one thing. It would seem also to indicate a greater sense of security, and it carries with it a possibility of having fresh air in the bedrooms. Whether it goes farther than a possibility is another matter, for the built-in cupboard bed with closed wooden doors is still the favorite sleeping place of an appreciable part of the population. Its abolition is a live issue in the way of hygiene, and one of the rules regulating government loans and subsidies is that they cannot be had for houses containing cupboard beds. Adjoining land has been developed by a number of housing Societies, philanthropic and co-operative.

Large districts are built up in 2½-story, two-family houses. This is a favorite Dutch type. The street floor contains a four-room apartment. An entirely separate entrance leads to the second floor. This also has four rooms, but the second floor tenant has the attic in addition, which besides storage space, contains one or two finished bedrooms. There are no cellars in Amsterdam and few in Holland.

The young insurgents against tradition who compose the new modernist school of architecture, which has attracted so much attention, owe much to Mr. Keppler, the architect at the head of the Amsterdam Housing Department, for their chance to show what they can do. Many of them found their opportunity for self-expression in designing blocks of apartment houses for co-operative societies. Some of them have been employed by private builders to design middle class apartments.

A whole extension at the south of the city, block after block, street after street, is being filled with them. This would seem to indicate that the new school has struck a genuinely popular chord. Speculative builders, as a class, are not strong on Art for Art's sake. To the credit of the modern school, it must be said that it has discovered (or rediscovered) the beauty of plain wall surfaces, that it masses its windows instead of sprinkling them, and that it treats the backs of houses and the interiors of blocks as carefully as the street facades. It is a characteristic of the school (whether a merit or not, I do not pretend to say) that it



revels in horizontal lines and flat roofs, but unless well handled they are likely to produce monotony.

On the other hand, it sometimes seems to my unenlightened lay mind to be straining to make bricks and mortar do things for which they are essentially unfit,—to make them curve and billow and cascade—even to “symbolize the rapid movement of modern life”,—as if it weren’t bad enough to have to run after street cars oneself without going home at night to a house which appears to be doing the same thing.

In any group struggling for new forms of expression since genius is scarce and talent unevenly distributed, many who aid at originality achieve only eccentricity. “But it is the artist’s business to externalize his dreams”, a distinguished exponent of the school said to me. And the Puritan in me could not help replying, “If he is going to externalize them in houses, which someone else has to pay for, and the taxpayers have to subsidize, and men, women and children have to live their lives in for the next 75 years, then he has no moral right to indulge in nightmares”.

I am afraid I shall be suspected of being too elderly to appreciate modern Dutch architecture if I do not hasten to describe a place where I enjoyed it wholeheartedly. Hilversum is a residential suburb of Amsterdam, 18 miles distant, with about 45,000 inhabitants. But in addition to its homes of prosperous Amsterdam business men, it has woolen mills, perfume distilleries, and some other industries, and consequently a considerable working population. For them the city has undertaken an extensive building programme which is being carried out by its director of public works, W. M. Dudok, who is a well known modernist architect.

Seven hundred 1½-story cottages have been built on a very irregular tract of land already owned by the city, surrounded and even penetrated by other buildings, making a difficult problem for the architect, which has been treated with much skill. The settlement is grouped around four centers, each with a distinctive character of its own, yet harmonizing with its neighbors. The principal center is about a large school building with outspread, protecting wings and a tall square clock tower which dominates—and keeps guard over—the whole community.

Two other centers contain schools, one a business high school with a quiet blue and gray interior color scheme, calculated to soothe the sensitive nerves of adolescence, the other for little children—wonderfully gay inside with the tulip colors the Dutch love so well—brilliant yellow walls, brilliant green paint on doors

and window frames, with sash curtains of red and white checked gingham, and with red geraniums growing in pots. The fourth center is a singularly peaceful little quadrangle behind the public library. Old people and childless couples are largely lodged there. Big families with romping children congregate elsewhere. The coloring is quiet and restful.

The library and reading room are over a large round archway leading into this sequestered spot. A straight opening between houses leads out at the other end. Looking from in front of the library through the circular arch, past the lozenge-shaped bed of dark green shrubbery in the center of the quadrangle, through the straight opening beyond, the eye rests on a pair of cottage doors on the opposite side of the transverse street, painted a vivid parrot green and surmounted by a long slope of red tile roof, behind which in the distance rises the old Hilversum church. The effect is startlingly decorative and wonderfully picturesque.

Near the tulip-colored school is a public bath-house with flat roof and plain brick walls, which first gave me the cue for which I had half consciously been groping. What was it these Dutch modernists reminded me of with their horizontal lines and unbroken wall surfaces? Why, Egypt of course! They think it all comes out of their ultra-modern inner consciousness, but it doesn't. The brown skinned architects of Karnak and Luxor dreamed the same dreams three thousand years ago. Be that as it may, the cottages of Hilversum are not Egyptian, but Dutch—thoroughly and essentially Dutch—and that is why I like them so much. They preserve the red tile roofs of Holland and the traditional aspect of a Dutch cottage, than which no more peaceful, homelike, wholesome type exists. Why should a country blessed with red tile roofs want to trade them off for our ugly flat roofs?

Mr. Dudok apparently does not, but he varies his tile roofs astonishingly. Some have only a moderate pitch; others slope steeply, and others still are bent to form mansards. They are built in rows, but the rows are broken, here by a pair of steep gables, there by a change in the setback. Excepting for some experiments on the first few streets, the walls of all the dwellings are of plain red brick. The Hilversum brick is of a dull shade, almost grayish below the deep red of the roof tiles. But the doors and window casings afford a chance for brilliant and beautiful color effects. Deep green and bright orange are the favorite colors, set off by narrow lines of black. It is surprising how much character these black lines add.

The strangest thing is the way you can depend on Dutch housewives to hang just the right shades of curtains in the windows and to plant just the right shades of flowers in the tiny garden plots. Not one of them trains crimson ramblers around those orange and black window casings or plants purple petunias in the beds. No, they plant masses of flaming marigolds, and their little boys and girls wear knit scarfs and caps of the same vivid greens that adorn their doors.

Wherever one goes in the Hilversum Garden Suburb there are vistas, interesting both in form and color,—a great deal of variety with complete, essential unity of style and purpose. All this has been brought about by the use of very simple and inexpensive means. The varying angles of the roofs, the heights and widths of chimneys, the sizes and groupings of windows, the shapes of the window panes, the treatment of front doors, the occasional use of a low brick wall on the boundary line,—these and a hundred other details have been employed to bring about the desired effects. The final, acid test of the merit of the Hilversum cottages is, to my mind, that the working people for whom they were built have never for a moment been subordinated to aesthetic considerations, and expense accounts have been so carefully watched that after completing the 700 dwellings planned there remains a surplus which will permit continued building. The beauty of it is therefore a free gift. Not a single family less gets a new house because of it.

Rotterdam has a very strong philanthropic housing society which has constructed a whole Garden Suburb, with some 3,000 red brick cottages at Vreewyk, which means "Place of Peace". It lies to the south of the river Maas, the main part of the city being on the north bank. I visited one cottage of the largest type, containing parlor, living room, kitchen and four bedrooms, one of them in the mansard. It was occupied by a family with seven children, and the rent was only 5 florins (\$2) a week. I noted a generous supply of closets and cupboards. Contrary to popular impression, which I used to share, large families are not prevalent in Holland. The average number of children per family is less than three, and the number is decreasing.

The streets of Vreewyk are straight, but the layout is not that of a gridiron. The cottages are in rows, but considerable care has been taken to avoid monotony, and open places with shrubbery and trees are frequent. Sometimes the houses are built directly on the sidewalk, and sometimes there is a setback with a bit of



greenery. On east and west streets this is found on the south side of the street only. I had noticed the same thing in Amsterdam. It was pointed out to me (1) that flowers do not grow well on the north side of the street, (2) that no garden at all looks better than one which is ragged, and (3) that the amount of money saved, in view of the cost of land, is really worth saving. In Holland the smallest bit of land is valuable.

A housing trip to Rotterdam would be incomplete without a visit to Heyplaat, a Garden Suburb built for its employees by the Rotterdam Dry Dock Company shortly before the war. It contains about 400 brick dwellings a square with a bronze fountain, and a picturesque archway, with single rooms for bachelors over it and a restaurant adjacent. There is also a kindergarten from which were emerging, when I was there, as plump and rosy a set of youngsters as one could wish to see. Heyplaat has been built long enough for trees and shrubbery to be well grown.

EDITH ELMER WOOD

## HOUSING SHORTAGE DECREASING IN SWEDEN

In an attempt to judge the probable effects of the Rent Control laws which expired a few weeks ago, the Swedish Labor Bureau a year ago undertook an inquiry into the housing situation, and questionnaires were sent to various cities making inquiry as to the number of families without homes, the number of new buildings under construction and whether hardship was likely to result to tenants if the Rent Restriction laws were allowed to lapse.

The replies received to this inquiry seemed to indicate that at that time the housing shortage was on the decrease. Only 26 cities reported families without homes, the total number of such families being 156 and embracing 717 persons.

Although only 26 cities reported that there were no families without shelter, it is pointed out in the report that there is still considerable overcrowding and that houses unfit for occupancy are still in use in many instances owing to the difficulty of securing proper accommodation. The city of Malmo, for example, reported that 198 one-room and 2-room flats, unsuitable for occupancy, were inhabited, although no comprehensive data was secured on the extent of overcrowding, yet the evil is still said to be serious.



With regard to new construction, 103 cities reported that housing projects were under way which, when completed, would supply a total of 3,017 apartments over half of which were 2-room and 3-room apartments.

As to whether there was likely to be a shortage of housing when the Rent laws expired this fall, there was much difference of opinion. In fully 65% of the smaller cities it was thought that the supply of houses would by that time be sufficient to take care of the population.

Recent studies of housing production in Sweden since 1913 show interesting trends in the development of that country. In 1921 the largest number of houses which had been built in any year since 1914 were built, viz., 1753 houses containing accommodations for 6365 families. During the period 1913-1921, a change has been occurring in the character of Swedish building, large houses with from 3 up to 10 or more apartments are seeming to lose ground while small houses of cheaper construction have gained. Whether this is due to the influence of the English Garden Village movement is hard to say, but it undoubtedly has had its effect. If Sweden is turning from block dwellings to smaller and lower buildings she is greatly to be congratulated. The figures would seem to indicate this; for, in 1913, houses of 3 stories or over formed 31% of the total built, while in 1921 they formed but 8%.

An interesting commentary on the part that state aid to housing has played in the extent of building operations in Sweden in recent years is to be found in the figures presented in the Report of the Swedish Labor Bureau from which this information has been taken. In 1916 of the 5754 apartments built 21.3% were built with public aid. In 1921 of the 6365 apartments constructed 45.6% were built with public aid. From 1917 to the end of 1922 public aid was extended in the erection of 4,607 houses (3844 of these being homes built by the persons who were to live in them) having 37,488 rooms and 12,757 apartments. The total cost of these buildings amounted to about 160,000,000 kronor (\$42,880,000 par). Of this amount 28,900,000 kronor (\$7,745,200 par) was covered by public aid given in the form of loans and 15,800,000 kronor (\$4,234,400 par) in the form of state aid.

In 1922 requests for loans totaling 20,000,000 kronor (\$5,360,000 par) were received from 103 Communes and one private person for building operations which it was estimated would amount to about 47,000,000 kronor (\$12,596,000 par).

## RENT CONTROL IN FINLAND

Finland, in common with the other countries of Europe, has been going through the throes of efforts to control high rents. When in June 1922 the then Rent Control Law expired, in order to meet the situation a temporary law was passed to extend it until June 1923 which provided that any unreasonable increases in rent would have to be refunded by the landlords. Unreasonable increases were defined and the maximum reasonable rates differed according to local conditions.

In the meantime having thus secured breathing space the Ministry of Social Affairs caused an investigation to be made into the housing situation in the leading cities throughout the country carried out during the summer of 1922 by means of questionnaires. The returns to this inquiry seem to indicate that in the smaller cities the housing shortage has been met, some cities reporting that a scarcity of houses no longer existed. In the larger cities conditions were found to be less satisfactory.

On the basis of the facts ascertained by this inquiry Finland has developed a programme of rent control and state aid to housing which those responsible hope will restore the country to normal conditions at as early a date as practicable.

### THE RENT CONTROL LAW

On January 4th of this year a Rent Control Law was passed taking effect on June first and extending until June first of 1924, after which date rent control is to lapse, with the interesting exception that the law will still apply to those cases where the regulations have been disobeyed.

Rates are fixed on the square meter of floor space and vary for different sections of the city and according to the condition of repair of the building. Specific increases to the basic rent are authorized in cases where the buildings are provided with central heat, elevators &c. In addition, a tenant subletting unfurnished rooms is authorized to charge 50% above the maximum rate that he himself may be called upon to pay.

The maximum rents permitted under the new law are from 10 to 30% higher than those allowed under the interim legislation of 1922. Owing to the fact that rents were controlled by law, rents have not risen in proportion to other elements

of the cost of living. It is hoped that the increases now permitted will lessen this disparity, so that when in 1924 rents are decontrolled the change to an economic rent may not be too violent.

## STATE AID FOR HOUSING

In February a new law was passed with relation to government aid to housing, closely resembling the terms of the earlier law which at that time expired. Under the new act government aid is limited to communities having a marked shortage of houses; and is given in the forms of grants to local authorities, who may either undertake building operations themselves or lend money to public utility societies or private persons who will do so, thus following quite closely the new English scheme of government aid to housing of the present year.

Buildings for which loans may be made must be solely for dwelling purposes, must not exceed certain specified size limits (again following the precedent of the new English Act), must be designed to last at least 50 years, must be on land owned by or leased from the community and must be started and completed within certain specified dates.

The aid given may be of two kinds—subsidies on which for 10 years no interest is charged; and amortization loans on which payments covering interest at 5% and at least 1% for amortization begin with the second year. The money for subsidies is obtained from the State by the local authorities on a 10-year non-interest-bearing bond. To secure these funds, the authorities must bind themselves to furnish land for the houses on 50-year leases at not more than a specified rent, and also to furnish from 10 to 15% of the estimated building costs, either by providing building material at reduced prices or in some other way which the State may designate.

Subsidies made by the local authorities to the builder must not exceed 30% of the building costs in the case of a Public Utility Society or 20% in the case of a private individual. The loans are made for 10 years, and if during this period the owner wishes to sell the building the authorities have the right to buy it in at cost, an allowance being made for improvements or additions to the original plan on which the loan was based. If the owner wishes to rent the house, the authorities may fix the maximum rent to be charged. At the end of the 10-year period



the building is to be valued, and if, owing to the progress of deflation, its value is less than the cost of construction the State will bear a certain part of the loss; for any part of the loan not covered by such a loss a new agreement is to be made, concerning which the only terms laid down at present are that not more than 3% interest will be charged and the period for paying off the loan will not be less than 20 years.

The sum of the two kinds of loans may not exceed 5,000 marks (\$965 par) for each room in the house on which the loans are made, and the amortization loan, together with other loans, may not exceed 60% of the value of the property.

Special provisions are made to aid in providing houses for agricultural workers in rural districts where there is a marked shortage of such housing. For this purpose noninterest-bearing loans are made to the local authorities, on which no payments are to be made for 5 years; thereafter one-tenth is to be paid off annually. From the funds thus provided loans are to be made to agricultural workers who wish to build homes either on their own land or on land leased from the local authorities; in the latter case the lease must have at least 20 years yet to run. Loans are restricted to Finnish citizens of good character earning their living by agriculture or its subsidiary occupations. Preference is given to those who, in addition to holding the land on which the house is to be built, have also garden and potato land and who can keep a cow.

The loans may not be less than 5,000 marks (\$965, par) nor more than 12,000 marks (\$2,316, par) nor may they exceed 75% of the cost of the projected building. The borrower pays 4½% interest and must pay back the loan within 15 years. Buildings on which loans are made must be insured, and in case of their destruction by fire the loan is a first charge on the insurance.

Since the beginning of 1920 Finland has appropriated the following amounts to be used for State aid to building: In 1920, 20,000,000 marks; in 1921, 15,000,000 marks; 1922, 10,000,000 marks; in 1923, 15,000,000 marks.

Of the 1923 appropriation 12,000,000 marks is for general purposes, while 3,000,000 marks is expressly reserved for improving housing conditions of rural workers.



## PROGRESS IN RUSSIA

Dispatches from Moscow report an interesting feature of the great Moscow Agricultural Exhibition held this summer. The feature which has interest for housing reformers is the exhibit of two life-sized Russian villages, one of the old style and the other of the new, repeating in every detail the characteristic features of such communities. The replica of the old-time homes contains copies of dwellings in every section of Russia from the log cabin in the north to the mud huts of the Don Cossacks.

In the modern village there were shown electric lights, running water and trim modern buildings designed to achieve the maximum of health and comfort by Russia's best architects.

## THE HOUSING SHORTAGE AS A MORAL AGENT

One surprising by-product of the housing shortage in Russia is its effect in decreasing divorce and encouraging marriage.

Recent dispatches from Moscow state that although divorces are extremely easy to obtain under Soviet laws, they are decreasing because of the housing shortage, and for the same reason marriages are being promoted; so that the old joke about a man's marrying his landlady in order to get a room seems to be coming true.

Notwithstanding the "free terminal facilities" which the people of Moscow enjoy, there were but 49 divorces in that city in January as compared with 2214 marriages.

The marital relation has apparently been reduced to a simple formula under "enlightened" Soviet rule.

If a man and woman desire to be married, they go before a magistrate and declare their wish and they are married. Similarly, if they desire a divorce they go before a magistrate and say they cannot get along and they are at once divorced.

Recent statistics as to divorce in the United States would seem to indicate that we are rapidly approaching a similar state.

## THE SITUATION IN COPENHAGEN

According to official reports a serious housing shortage continues to exist in the city of Copenhagen. During the period from 1914 to April of the present year it is estimated that the

population of that city increased by 82,000. During the same period there was a net increase of but 22,212 in the number of apartments available in the city.

At the present time it is estimated that Copenhagen needs 4200 more apartments to reach the housing standard it had in 1914. Overcrowding seems to be steadily on the increase; the number of families with lodgers having increased to 5,007 in February 1923 as against 3,831 in 1921. About 60% of these apartments are 2 and 3-room apartments and the number of persons per room is found to be 2.6 in the 2-room apartments and 1.9 in the 3-room apartments.

Denmark, apparently, is suffering as all other countries have suffered from the housing shortage, due to the same causes.

## THE SHORTAGE IN SPAIN

The situation in Spain has recently been brought to public notice at a convention of building contractors held in Madrid some months ago. In connection with that meeting reports were prepared showing that the net increase in dwellings in the decade ending in 1920 in the city of Madrid was 5407 dwellings, while the population of the city increased in that time 210,086. Between the years 1910 and 1915, an average of one house for each 26 inhabitants was constructed, and in the 5 year period following, namely, between 1915 and 1920, an average of only one house for each 52 persons was constructed. It was stated that the situation in other cities closely resembles that in Madrid.

In assigning causes for the present housing shortage, labor troubles and high wages are said to be among the chief elements. It was estimated that during the year 1920, in the construction industry along 715,000 working days were lost in Madrid by strikes and lockouts.

The increase in the wages of labor has been found to be a very potent element in the high cost of building. Figures published recently by the Institute of Social Reform show an increase of 185% in carpenters' wages (taking into consideration both increased rate of pay and decreased output) in painters' wages an increase of 189%, in mason's labor 190%, in paper-hangers' labor 144%. At the same time there has been a rise of 131% in the cost of building materials.

To cope with this situation the Building Convention proposed an annual loan from the State with a mortgage guarantee of

20,000,000 *pesetas* for a number of years, that new construction for dwelling purposes be exempted from municipal taxation for a 3-year period, and that the State grant certain exceptions in property, transfer and stamp taxes.

## IN ITALY

Recent dispatches from Rome indicate that, notwithstanding the drastic steps taken by Mussolini referred to in our last issue, the housing shortage continues serious in Italy and especially in the larger cities.

The building experts in those cities agree that unless the Government does something to spur private initiative into some kind of action soon, thousands of young couples must put off marrying for an indefinite period on account of the lack of apartments in which to make their homes.

In Rome it is reported that there is a need at the present time of at least 120,000 rooms of which only 55,000 are in course of construction and are expected to be ready by the close of the present year. It is estimated that by that time the demand will have increased to 150,000 rooms on account of the new marriages and will keep on increasing year after year at about the same rate.

A similar situation prevails in the cities of Milan, Turin and Naples, where the so-called "premium" system is said to flourish by which a premium is paid over the asking price merely for the sake of securing for one or two years a living accommodation. Up to the present time the Government has granted to Coöperative Building Associations over 2 billion lira toward the building of new homes repayable in 25 or 50 years, but this huge sum, it is stated, has merely been a drop in the bucket when the fact is taken into consideration that the population of Italy is increasing at the rate of 400,000 a year. In addition to these direct grants of sums by Government there has also been a remission of taxes in certain cases, the loaning of money at a low rate of interest, 2% to 3%, and by a resolute policy, at whatever it costs in popularity, of throwing the responsibility of relationship between landlord and tenant upon the two parties concerned.

While it is hoped that there will be a direct stimulus to private enterprise arising from the abolition of all measures restricting the increase of rents, the decontrol having gone into effect this summer, thus far capital has not shown itself very anxious to



enter the building field chiefly on account of the high price of building material and the even higher cost of labor in the building trades—a situation which is not very different from that which prevails in the United States and in other countries.

## RENT CONTROL IN ANCIENT ROME

That there is “nothing new under the sun” is evidenced by recent dispatches indicating that even Ancient Rome was not free from rent control legislation.

Crassus, whose fortune was largely based upon his profits in the building of houses, was in constant trouble with the courts when he tried to make a member of the Senate pay 15,000 *sesterces* for a bachelor’s apartment.

In order to cope with the abuses which then existed, Caesar promulgated a law by which landlords were limited to a maximum rent of 2,000 *sesterces* a year for villas in Rome, nor more than 500 *sesterces* in other parts of the country (equivalent to about \$100 and \$25, respectively).

## GOVERNMENT AID IN GREECE

Dispatches from Athens indicate that even in war-torn Greece the Government is concerning itself with the housing shortage. Among the measures which it is reported the Government has taken to stimulate the construction of houses, especially for the lower paid workers, is one permitting the Government to acquire land for the erection of such dwellings; another permits the importation of building materials free without payment of duty, and a third provides for exemption from local taxes for a 20-year period.

## IN BELGRADE

In spite of the building boom of the last 2 or 3 years, Belgrade is reported to be overcrowded and suitable housing to be at a premium. Rents are high, an unfurnished apartment of 4 small rooms bring \$40 a month, while the better ones bring from \$50 to \$60. In terms of the wages of a skilled mechanic this would mean that under the most favorable circumstances he could not earn in 30 days of continuous work enough to pay one month’s rent for even the cheapest apartment.

Many of the new buildings are multiple dwellings containing



from 6 to 12 apartments, usually of from 4 to 6 rooms each. Elevators are said to be practically unknown and central heating is rare. The houses are built of brick and reinforced concrete. All the windows are double as a protection against the strong cold winds which prevail in Belgrade and in houses which do not have central heating a tile stove is built in each room as a part of the house.

To help the city meet its housing difficulties the Government has resorted to two means—a government loan and exemption of taxation on new houses. The law under which the Government loans money was enacted in 1922 and authorizes the Government to lend to the city of Belgrade 150,000,000 *dinars* to be used for “the immediate work of repair and extension of the water system, drainage, tramways and lighting, pavement, and erection of small houses.”

The tax exemption scheme is designed especially to encourage the erection of high buildings. New buildings erected within the city of Belgrade since November first, 1916, complying with certain conditions are exempt from payment of all state taxes and municipality charges beginning with the date of the completion for the following periods:

- a. One story and two story houses, for a period of 20 years.
- b. Three story and over, for a period of 30 years.

The same tendency toward the encouragement of high buildings is to be found in another part of the law which provides that in a certain part of the city no house may be erected having less than 4 stories, while in another part of the city at least two stories are required.

## HOUSING IN WESTERN EUROPE

All students of housing will look forward with interest to Mrs. Edith Elmer Wood's new book “Housing Progress in Western Europe” which is now on the press and will soon be published by E. P. Dutton & Co.

With the guidance of visiting nurses and friendly rent collectors and others Mrs. Wood made a point of seeing the worst as well as the best and newest accommodations for the working classes in every city that she visited in Europe a year ago. We publish in another place an extract giving Mrs. Wood's impressions of some of the newest houses in Holland.

It is interesting to note that Mrs. Wood says that nowhere has she seen houses even remotely comparable to the 10,000 old-law tenements of lower Manhattan built before 1879 or any layout as bad as that of the North End of Boston.

The book is fully illustrated with pictures of the latest housing developments and improved municipal cottages and tenements.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT GOTHENBURG

The International Town Planning Conference and Exhibition held at Gothenburg this summer was evidently a great success. Despite the unsettled conditions in Europe there were between 250 and 300 delegates present from 22 different countries.

Enthusiastic reports from those delegates who attended the Conference bear testimony to its success, accounts of it having appeared over the signatures of Raymond Unwin, G. L. Pepler and H. Chapman in England and Flavel Shurtleff in the United States. The latter country was well represented. Although the delegation that went this great distance was not a large one, America sent of its best in the Town Planning field, for among the American delegates were John Nolen, Flavel Shurtleff, W. H. Schuchardt of Milwaukee and others.

In connection with the Conference a great International Cities & Town Planning Exhibition was held which was considered by all those who saw it to be a thoroughly representative and valuable exhibition of current developments in this field throughout the world reflecting great credit upon those responsible for it, and particularly upon Mr. Albert Lilienberg, the Chairman of the Swedish Committee.

A well illustrated Catalogue of this Exhibition has been published in English. It is something more than a catalogue, for it contains much valuable information on the planning of towns in various countries. It contains nearly 400 pages and is very fully illustrated with photographs, diagrams and plans.

All students of the Town Planning movement will undoubtedly wish to obtain a copy of this Catalogue, which can be obtained for \$2, which includes postage, upon application to: *Internationella Stadysbygnadsutställningen, Göteborg, 1, Sweden.*

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BUILDING OWNERS

The *Union de la Propriété Batie de France*, a federation of 140 local property owners' organizations throughout France, has called an International Congress of property owners from other countries which was held in Paris the latter part of October. Delegations from Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Rumania, Switzerland, Czecho-Slovakia and other countries were represented at this conference. Its importance can be apprehended by the fact that the President of the French Republic accepted the Honorary Presidency of the Conference.

### IN BOMBAY

Bombay, like other large cities, has an acute housing problem. Not only is it customary for whole families to live in a single room but this room frequently accommodates a number of other relations of the family.

To meet the present urgent need caused by the housing shortage the Government is undertaking the erection of tenement buildings to provide accommodations for some 50,000 families. In view of the high cost of land it has not been found practicable to provide for the poorer classes, up to the present, in any form of dwelling other than block dwellings or tenements, each block containing accommodation for 80 families. One of such schemes now under construction is that known as the Worli, a development of 4-story tenements or "*chawls*" built in reinforced concrete with skeleton construction, the walls being thin cement blocks built up directly on the floors.

Land speculation which has been rife in Bombay proper, has also in recent years extended out to the suburban districts many miles outside the city where it is quite a common thing to find land which has quadrupled in value during the past 10 years. The Government is dealing with the problem, however, and has taken up the matter in a comprehensive way probably unequalled in any part of the world, especially with regard to its acquisition of land and its pooling of ownership of various plots and its redistribution in accordance with a well thought out scheme of development.



So popular have the suburban town planning schemes become as a means of quickly earned profits that it has been found necessary for the Government to take over and acquire practically the entire remaining area of building land within the suburban district. In order to make this land available a suburban railway, 7 or 8 miles in length has been constructed crossing the island of Salsette and linking up with the existing railway.

Along the new route thus opened up, as well as along the existing railways and main roads a number of settlements are springing up. A plan for the development and town planning of the whole suburban region has been prepared by W. R. Davidge, the distinguished British Town Planner, serving as consulting Town Planner to the Government of Bombay.

An interesting instance of the extent to which town planning principles are being discussed in this part of the world is the holding of a civic exhibition by the University of Bombay very recently with a Cities and Town Planning Division. The primary object of this exhibition has been to show first what cities are and how they grew, then what city planning means and why it pays. The exhibition was a very great success.

## THE HOUSING SITUATION IN SOUTH AMERICA\*

### ARGENTINA

Argentina, in common with the other countries of the world, has suffered from a serious housing shortage due to very much the same causes as have operated in other countries, viz., the war and the high cost of building materials and labor. In addition there has been a rapid increase of population owing to war-time prosperity and activity, with the result that serious overcrowding has resulted.

This overcrowding has become so acute that it is stated that it has become the general rule to rent only one room of a house to a family, washing and cooking being done in the common court yard. These houses have become known as "*conventillos*", or little convents. A natural consequence of this situation has been a great increase in rents. An investigation made by the national Department of Labor of the average rent of one room in a tenement house showed an index figure of 169 for 1921 as compared with 100 in 1914. These conditions led to

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\* *From U. S. Labor Review.*



the enactment of a housing law in 1915 followed by regulations issued in 1917.

This law provides for a National Commission on Low-Priced Houses, consisting of 5 members, whose function it is to study and promote the construction and sanitation of low-priced houses; also to engage in the actual production of the buildings. These houses are to be sold at cost to reliable persons with families, to be chosen by lot from among skilled and unskilled laborers and salaried employees. Any person having property worth more than 3,000 *pesos* (\$1274 par) or an equivalent income is debarred from purchasing the houses. The houses are to be sold on a long term plan to be paid off by monthly payments in 20 years at 3%.

In addition to these provisions, import duties on materials for such houses are remitted. A scheme for life insurance in connection with the buying of these homes is provided for. Certain houses, viz., those not costing more than 10,000 *pesos* (\$4245) are exempt from land taxes if their plans are approved by the Commission.

The regulations issued by the Commission contain detailed provisions as to the location, construction and sanitation of the houses, ample toilets, bath and washrooms being required. To offset the scantiness of the furniture in the average laborer's home, cupboards and other articles of furniture are to be built in.

One feature of the scheme—which is being urged for adoption in the United States—is the use of the National Postal Savings Funds for loans for house building. Under the Argentine law the National Postal Savings Fund may lend to the Commission up to 50% of its deposits at 5% interest.

After a period of study and investigation of housing conditions the National Commission on Low-priced Houses began its building activities in 1919. The first housing venture was a four-story tenement house of brick and concrete stucco, consisting of 67 2- and 3-room apartments and costing 806,509 *pesos*, national currency (\$342,363, par). The rents were fixed at 47, 45, 42, 40, 38, and 35 *pesos* (\$20, \$19, \$18, \$17, \$16, and \$15, par) per month. This tenement is of the general type that is to be used by the Commission for crowded city districts. Such tenements are built primarily for families with many children, and each tenement fronts on a park or playground. While the plans do not retain the open *patio* for each apartment, they include a

large courtyard, the area of which is required by law to be not less than 50 square meters in the case of four-story buildings.

The first tenement was not completed till about the middle of 1921, but before it was ready for occupancy 2,318 families had petitioned for quarters. Formal applications were limited to families with an income of less than 200 *pesos* (\$85, par) per month, preference being given to the largest families. The final list from which the drawing was made contained 570 names. Exceptional preference and direct assignment were made in the case of 15 laborers, each with a wife and 10 children and having a small income, who at the time of the lottery were each occupying one or two rooms in the "*conventillos*" and paying 40 to 60 *pesos* (\$17 to \$25, par) per month for rent.

The next building operation undertaken by the Commission was a group of 160 individual houses, consisting of 3 and 4 rooms each, besides bathroom and kitchen, which rent for 45 and 55 *pesos* (\$19 and \$23, par) per month, respectively. This community of laborer's homes when completed will consist of 300 houses. This community group system is considered a decided departure in South American housing, inasmuch as the architects completely abandoned the old Spanish and Moorish styles. The ground plan is a direct copy of the community housing plan so much used in the United States during the last few years. The houses are two stories in height and built of brick and stucco with Spanish tile roofs.

Another tenement consisting of 18 three-room and 23 two-room apartments, renting for 60 and 50 *pesos* (\$25 and \$21, par) per month, respectively, has been completed. At the close of the period covered by the report of the Commission, June, 1922, plans were being made for 80 more houses, which will form part of a new community group of 501 houses, and sites had been obtained for 1,000 more dwellings, though funds were not then available for construction work.

The Commission has also approved plans for 64 individual houses and a tenement house to be constructed by the *Union Popular Catolica Argentina*.

The provincial governments are to some extent following the lead of the national Government in undertaking to improve and increase housing facilities. For example, the Province of Santa Fé has a housing commission called *Junta Provincial de Fomento de Casas Baratas*, with main offices in Rosario and Santa

Fé. The national Commission also has honorary subcommissions at various points in the interior.

It is said that little building is being done by private initiative, because those who would ordinarily build houses to rent feel that the terms of the rent law make such an investment unprofitable. Therefore in spite of the efforts of the national Commission and the municipality of Buenos Aires, there is still a serious housing shortage in the national capital, which was estimated to be from 30,000 to 40,000 dwellings in July, 1922. It is believed, however, that sufficient building has been done to alleviate the conditions in the worst of the "*conventillos*".

It is said that the most important accomplishment of the Commission has been the breaking down of the barriers of tradition and the introduction of a modern style of housing more suitable to a great city.

## HOUSING FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN BRAZIL

A law was recently passed by the national Congress of Brazil providing for the erection and purchase of dwelling houses for federal government employees and laborers, and also for officers of the Brazilian army and navy. This law authorizes the Government to construct not more than 5000 residences. The cost of each is not to exceed 10 *contos*, or approximately \$1,400 at present rate of exchange.

Easy payments, in monthly instalments, that may extend over a period of 15 years, are provided for. Instead of accepting a residence, the government employee or laborer may apply to the Government for a loan to build his own dwelling if he possesses real estate to offer as a guarantee. Officers of the army and navy, as well as government employees, may also obtain financial assistance from the Government for the purpose of purchasing or building residences. In this case the loans are granted by the Government in accordance with the amount of the pension to which the applicant may be entitled at the time of his request.

The Government is authorized to negotiate a loan of 30,000 *contos* (about four million dollars at the present exchange), issuing the necessary number of bonds to obtain the funds required to carry this law into effect.



## IN CHILE\*

The housing problems of Chile have not been confined entirely to the cities but have arisen also in the nitrate fields of the North and the coal-mining regions of the South. In the nitrate fields, where the housing is necessarily of a more or less temporary character, the Government, with the cooperation of the operators, has succeeded in materially improving housing conditions since the report of the Government Commission in 1917. Considerable improvement in the housing facilities at the coal mines has been noted since the investigation made by a Government Commission during the coal strike of 1920. It is said that the serious shortage of suitable houses has compelled the authorities to permit the continued use of many dwellings that are insanitary and uninhabitable under the law and that should be condemned and torn down.

At Arica, one of the nitrate ports, work has been started on the first of three workmen's apartment houses to be erected by the municipal government. The buildings will be 1-story high, and each will contain 60 apartments of identical size, consisting of 4 bedrooms, kitchen, covered *patio* (court, dining and sitting room,) open *patio*, and toilet facilities. The central court, or *patio*, will contain flower beds and facilities for washing clothes. Later on, bath houses are to be installed. The rents are to be no higher than are necessary to cover interest, expenses, depreciation and sinking fund and will cover electric lights and water. It is stated that the principal railroad entering the city plans to erect similar structures for its employees on the same street.

### LEGISLATION

The Chilean law relating to workmen's houses (No. 1838) was passed in 1906 and amended in 1909, 1911, 1912 and 1916. Under the terms of this law a Housing Commission called the *Consejo Superior de Habitaciones para Obreros* was created to supervise the work of the Commissions in the Departments and also to serve as the Commission for the Department of Santiago.

The duties of these Commissions are (1) to promote the construction of cheap hygienic houses for sale or for rent to the working class, (2) to look after the sanitation of workers'

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\* From U. S. Labor Review.



homes, (3) to approve plans and fix conditions for receiving aid from the Commission in building houses for workers, (4) to engage in actual building enterprises, and (5) to encourage the organization of building societies.

A period of 20 years is allowed for paying for houses sold to workmen. The Mortgage Loan Fund (*Caja de Crédito Hipotecario*) may loan up to 75% of the value of the property on building operations that have been approved by the Commission. The President is authorized to build houses for workmen and low-salaried employees in government industrial establishments.

As amended in 1916 the law provides that houses which have been declared "hygienic" by the Housing Commission and whose monthly rental value is not more than 80 *pesos* need pay only half the regular taxes and shall enjoy low water rates. All these concessions stop if the house ceases to be "hygienic" or is unoccupied. Building and cooperative societies, factory owners, stock companies, etc., that build such houses are also to enjoy the benefits allowed by the law.

The great defect of the law is said to be that it does not provide funds.

### HOUSING EXPOSITION AND CONFERENCE

An Exposition of Economical Housing was held in Santiago last year, and in connection with it a Conference was held. The Exposition consisted of exhibits of building materials of all sorts, drawings, pictures, and plans of low-priced houses that would meet the requirements of health and sanitation. The Conference was attended by government officials, architects and others interested in building, trade-union members, and private individuals interested in housing and welfare work. A number of Buenos Aires architects and housing specialists were present and took part. The general subjects of discussion were: the Political and Social Influence of Housing; the Relation between the Value of Property and Rent; the Relation of the State to the Housing Problem; Building Materials and Methods of Construction; Application of a Decreasing Mixed Life Insurance for Buying Small Holdings; Minimum Hygienic Requirements in Economical Housing; Relation of Rents of Cheap Houses to Wages and Salaries; and Sanitation, Heating and Lighting.

The report given on the work of the Housing Commissions and the municipalities from 1906 to 1921 showed that 1,415 owners

had been compelled to demolish 13,630 rooms, where 35,374 people lived, and repairs had been required on 507 properties containing 847 rooms, inhabited by 22,718 persons. In Santiago the Commission had built on 162 sites, 3,418 houses, containing 8,274 rooms.

Rents are reported to be high because of the scarcity of houses. The housing shortage is due, in turn, to the high cost of building materials and labor, as well as to the poor public lighting system, bad paving, lack of easy communications, and high cost of sewerage, gas, etc.

The Director of the Chilean Labor Office urged the creation of a Social Museum, such as exists in Argentina and Brazil, to study social problems, and it is thought likely that this suggestion will be carried out, and a part of the exhibits retained as a nucleus for a museum.

A bill for providing houses for all persons employed by the Republic has been introduced in the Senate by Sr. Guillermo Banados. He proposes that the newly formed *Museo Social* should take charge of the plan, selling the houses at cost on a basis of monthly instalments running for 15 years, the initial cost to be covered by a loan or by bonds to the amount of 50,000,000 *pesos* national currency.

## RENTS AND OVERCROWDING

A special bulletin issued by the Chilean Bureau of Labor (Bulletin No. 18) gives interesting information as to the rents of working-class dwellings and the extent of overcrowding in the various parts of that country although no figures are given for the country as a whole. In Santiago 2-room flats which rented for 16 *pesos* in 1913, commanded a rent of 30 *pesos* in 1918 and in 1921, 50.41 *pesos*. These, however, are exceptional figures. A statement of prevailing rents in 12 different cities of Chile shows that the average rent for a 2-room front tenement was slightly less in 1918 than it was in 1913. The figures are not given for the present time.

With regard to overcrowding, an investigation of conditions in Santiago including 712 tenements or "*conventillos*" in 1920 and 214 in 1921, showed that in 1920 these 712 tenement houses containing 11,553 rooms accommodated 37,967 persons, and in 1921, the 214 tenements containing 4094 rooms accommodated

12,768 persons, an average of 76.49% persons per tenement houses, and of 3.14% per room.

In 1921 the average number of persons per room varied in the 59 Departments of Chile that are included in the report from 1.2 to 5.5 persons; only 10 Departments had an average of 2 or less; 25 Departments averaged 2 to 3 persons per room; 20 averaged 3 to 4 persons and 4 had more than 4 persons per room.

The tenements or "*conventillos*"—buildings usually one story in height and built in the form of a hollow square with an interior court or *patio* serving as kitchen, laundry &c.—are rapidly being done away with and the new houses erected in their place are group or individual houses of a modern type.

Sometimes, however, on account of high rents and scarcity of dwellings, two or more families will occupy a house intended for only one family, making the overcrowding as bad as in the "*conventillos*".

Through the efforts of the National Housing Commission (*Consejo Superior de Habitaciones Obreras*), the Departmental Housing Commissions and the municipalities, considerable progress is being made in solving the housing problem, which is considered as one of the big national problems. This task includes condemning and demolishing the old, insanitary "*conventillos*," compelling repairs to those that are usable, and building and encouraging the building of low-priced, sanitary working-class houses.

## IN ECUADOR

In November, 1922, the cantonal council of Guayaquil (Ecuador) passed a resolution to begin the construction of homes for workmen and appropriated 25,000 *suces* (\$12,168, par) for the purpose. In 1924 and the following years the council will appropriate annually equal or greater sums until the homes needed have been constructed. Land owned by the cantonal government will be used for building sites, and the council will also furnish gravel and stone for grading and building.

To carry on this building programme the council on November 28 appointed a Commission on Workmen's Homes (*Comision de Edificacion Obrera*), consisting of a member of the council, the president of the carpenters' union (*Sociedad de Carpinteros*), and six workmen, the latter chosen for terms of two years. No one who is active in politics or is not a workman may be a member of



the Commission. Regulations concerning this building programme are to be drawn up by the Commission, subject to the approval of the council, which will pass any necessary ordinances and resolutions.

## SUBDIVISIONS IN THE ANTIPODES

An interesting discussion of property subdivisions from the point of view of the city planner comes to us from Adelaide, South Australia, in two articles published in *The Builder* written by W. Scott Griffiths under the title "Practical and Scientific Planning of Towns and Cities".

In these two articles, in a series of interesting diagrams Mr. Griffiths shows the advantages of lay-outs from the point of view of economic and intelligent development of property as well as the great gains that come in the better living conditions that result from intelligent site planning.

## TOWN PLANNING IN QUEENSLAND

A bill is now before the Queensland Parliament to amend the Local Authorities Act, which in its new form contains provisions that will greatly assist the Town Planning movement of Queensland. A "Greater Brisbane Bill" is also being prepared, and will doubtless become law within a few weeks.

The official records of the Parliamentary Debates of the past month or two indicate the intense feeling of citizens regarding these matters. The picturesque phrases which are used by the "honorable members" in these debates lead us to recall the fact that the Australians in their manners and customs are said to bear a resemblance to Americans.

The type of Problems which concern these legislators and citizens are much like the problems which confront us. The records of the debates are heavy laden with comments on size of lots (measured in perches), set-backs for houses, space between houses, size of verandas, street width, the danger of using streets for ball playing (cricket), traffic control, drainage, lighting, water supply, the principles of town planning, the need of devising sound schemes of financing public improvements, and all the other factors which entangle us in America and force us to think of ourselves as communities and not as mere individuals.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF

Boston



## GOVERNMENT HOUSING THAT FAILED

### NEW SOUTH WALES

Dispatches from New South Wales report that the New South Wales State Housing Scheme is to be abandoned. The Minister responsible states that the estimate for houses built under the scheme has been considerable exceeded, in some cases to the extent of 100%. Many of the occupants have paid no rent, although in possession 2 or 3 years. The actual cost to the State is not yet known, but is being investigated. Meanwhile no more houses are to be built, and the land bought for State housing is to be re-sold.

### IN THE FEDERATED MALAY STATES

After many months of consideration and discussion the new Town Planning bill for the Federated Malay States has been passed by the Federal Council.

The bill contains over 60 clauses providing for the making of general town plans by the Government Town Planner, acting in association with Town Planning Committees and other local authorities. Its scope is quite comprehensive, including Zoning, the establishment of building lines and the taking of land for public purposes &c. The powers for regulating land development, without paying compensation are said to be very wide, including complete control over land-subdivisions and building operations.

A Report on Town Planning in the Federated Malay States which has been printed as a supplement to the F. M. S. Government Gazette of May 18, 1923, casts much light on the situation in that part of the world.

A glance indicates that the problems in this distant country very much resemble our own. Close cooperation between individuals and organizations is requisite to progress. It would be interesting to see photographs of the romantic countryside and cities in which this Town Planning work is taking place.

Charles C. Reade, Government Town-Planner, comments on conditions there as follows:

Considerable progress has been made with the preparation of the General Town Plans for Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Kuala Kangsar, Klang,

Port Swettenham and Seremban; also numerous detailed schemes in connection therewith. These schemes entail frequent conferences with the various federal, state, Sanitary Board authorities and owners affected before details can be settled in a manner which will meet the requirements of the various departments or others affected. The preparation of the General Town Plans has either reached or is approaching the stage when their further consideration by local Town Planning Committees and other responsible authorities in terms of the proposed Town Planning and Development legislation will be essential.\*\*\*\*\*

The time has gone by in this country when the solution of town expansion problems could be met temporarily by the giving out of more state land. The expansion and development of both state and private land for current and future urban use or needs are inseparable from replanning and improvement operations in all our towns, both large and small. Without proper town planning legislation and organization existing problems can but intensify with added difficulty and expense to proper owners and the public. The year's working of the Town Planning Department is an indication of the practical results which may be secured upon an economic basis by the steady application of a permanent town planning policy and organization towards the building of normally healthy, convenient, and inexpensive towns indispensable to successful national production and development.

ARTHUR SHURTLEFF

Boston

## AUTOMOBILES OR HOMES

One factor contributing to the present shortage of dwellings available for rent is attributed in some quarters to the large investment in automobiles and their original cost and maintenance. It is pointed out that the married man who, for example, buys a small car and pays from \$400 to \$600 for this pleasure vehicle, could have purchased a cottage or bungalow and lot, paying in cash on account the amount that the automobile costs, and, with the help of a Building Association, have acquired title to the property and ultimately by payment of dues and interest become the absolute owner of a home without increasing his outlay beyond the ordinary monthly rental.

Persons of larger means frequently pay from \$2,000 to \$3,500 for a car way beyond their means, who reside in rented apartments or houses who, without regard for the future, are living for the present. The money thus expended would provide for

payment on the purchase of a very comfortable home and ultimately bring satisfaction, happiness and independence.

The Cleveland Trust Company, in a recent statement, point out that the American people are spending \$2 for automobiles for every \$3 of outlay for new buildings, not merely for dwellings but for all kinds of new buildings. They add that:

During the past four years motor expenditures have amounted to about \$6,600,000,000 and those for new buildings about \$10,000,000,000, according to the banks' computation.

Commenting on this situation the *American Lumberman* in an article entitled "Autos or Homes for June Brides?" has the following to say:

There is no gainsaying the fact that the automobile people are strictly on the job in the race for the consumer's dollar. Equally incontrovertible is the proposition that much of the money being expended for pleasure cars should be invested in homes. These thoughts are inspired in part by a "blurb" in the advertisement of a well-known car, appearing in the current magazines, reading as follows:

"Some day in June, when happy hours abound, a wonderful girl and a wonderful boy will leave their friends in a shower of rice—and start to roam. Then life will surely slip its tether and youth will be full of the promise of happy days to come. Give them a (name of automobile), the bright sky overhead, the green turf flying by—and just beyond the hill a thousand miles of open road—then a quiet inn for dinner."

The effusion serves to emphasize the fact that the number of young married people, who place possession of an automobile ahead of possession of a home is so large as to cause apprehension in the minds of all who have the future welfare of the country at heart. It is the home, not the automobile, that is rightly said to be the bulwark of the nation. But nowadays instead of building a home, or saving for one, the average newly married couple rent a few rooms and live in their car. In a majority of cases the luxurious limousine or touring car of the advertisement turns out to be a flivver and the "quiet inn" degenerates into a frowsy cafeteria or delicatessen.

While there is much to be said for the man who purchases a motor car and by that means has the pleasures of travel, spends time with his family that he would not otherwise, yet the figures above quoted give one pause and are undoubtedly a serious factor in the present housing shortage.

## CAN A HOUSE HAVE ENOUGH CLOSETS TO SATISFY A WOMAN?\*

Few men understand the value of a broom closet or a linen closet, or know what it means to have a little place in the kitchen to serve meals, or how convenient it is to have the ironing board in a wall cabinet.

It is perfectly natural that men should not appreciate these things. They have no part in their life. But you'll notice workmen keep their tools in handy kits and business men have their telephones, waste-baskets, files and stenographers conveniently near. So why should a woman not have her housekeeping equipment handy?

In the last two weeks I have been through over fifteen small homes built from Bureau plans, and have been so impressed by their comfort and housekeeping convenience that I want to tell you about them.

While the men-folks discussed beams, joists, finishes, etc., the mistress of the house and I usually chatted about things closer to a woman's heart. Before I left I had looked into every closet and had listened to enthusiastic praise of how easy the new house was to keep clean and picked up. "Fine" said my husband when the closets were displayed, but as a housekeeper I *knew* just how fine it meant to have plenty of closets in which to store things.

In one house just completed by a young couple, the space under the eaves had been used for the cutest little low closets. One closet at the head of the stairs was tucked away under the two windows. It was planned for blankets. Every woman knows that blankets are a problem in summer, for they take up so much room in the ordinary closet. This out of the way little closet under the eaves was just the place for blanket storage.

In each bedroom in addition to the good clothes closet provided in the plan, they had put in a little closet under the eaves

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\* From "*The Small Home*".



for shoes and boxes. These had double doors, and were finished in mahogany like the room doors.

These extra closets cost very little. The doors were taken from stock mill work. If you go over your plans with your contractor before building, you will often find that you can put in an extra closet or two, just where they will fit into your housekeeping scheme. If you wait until the house is under construction then, of course, it will cost more money to put in extra closets.

In another home built from a Bureau plan I found a built-in cupboard with a drop leaf for serving meals that is a fine thing for a small kitchen. The dining alcove is very popular. Women don't want to give up the dining-room, but they do like a little convenient place to serve meals in or near the kitchen. It saves lots of time and steps. Yet, sometimes the kitchen is too small to permit a dining alcove and in such a case this dresser would do nicely. Above in the wall there is a three sided china cabinet with pretty glass doors. Below is a dresser with drawers the top of which lets down so that three people can sit around it. When not in use it folds back out of the way. This I was surprised to learn, was not special cabinet work, but was selected from a stock mill work catalogue.

By rearranging the kitchen you can often squeeze in a breakfast nook. Some of the Bureau designs now offer an alternate detail for a recessed window to be built out in the kitchen so that it can contain a built-in seat. A table can be drawn up to this seat when desired.

How many men do you suppose would endure for years the old-fashioned ironing board? Sometimes it hangs in a dust bag above the cellar stairs. Again it rests behind a barricade of brooms and mops in a closet where it has to be lugged forth and balanced on two chairs. At the wrong height and uneven it does duty for two or three hours of heavy ironing. When you want to press out a wrinkled dress in a hurry the old-fashioned ironing board is a nuisance.

The adjustable ironing boards are improvements over the old single board, but still they can not hold a candle to the convenience of a built-in ironing board. These come in many sizes and styles. They rest in a shallow cabinet built in the wall and are well worth the \$12 or so that they may cost. Once adjusted to the ironer's height they are always ready, and can be lifted down and put back in a few minutes.

I imagine there is hardly a person who at some time or another has not tried to plan a house. If you have tried it, you have undoubtedly noticed that you found, perhaps, no trouble laying out the rooms, but the location of stairs and closets proved your Waterloo. Stairs we can pass over, but it surely requires ingenuity, skill and experience to plan for the necessary closets without cutting into room space.

A broom closet in the rear hall or in the kitchen is a mighty handy thing. A broom in a corner is a nuisance. It falls down with a clatter at the least jar. The ideal place for brooms, mops, dusters and cleaning powders are in a closet in the kitchen or rear entry.

Linen closets are provided in every Bureau plan. With linen and white sales in January and August women don't have to keep on hand the supplies of bedding and linen that was at one time necessary, so linen closets do not have to be large nowadays. No woman whose home is built from a Bureau plan has to get along without a nice closet for her linen.

In many plans there are even towel closets in the bath room and a medicine cabinet. These can be left out, but the up-to-date American home is justly proud of its well equipped bath-room.

Bureau plans also provide a place for the refrigerator, either in the kitchen where it is convenient, or in the entry or back porch. An outside icing door is a convenience, because with one the ice man does not have to track mud into the kitchen. Then, too, you can go away and lock the back door, yet know that ice will be put in just the same.

The vote isn't the only emancipation that women have received in the last few years. It's the daily little emancipations from work, the cutting down of steps for tired feet, that count for much in a woman's life. Breakfast nooks, built-in-ironing boards, many and convenient closets are vastly important to a woman keeping house.

And it is because I know this so well after ten years' house-keeping experience, that I asked for this little space to tell the women who may read this bulletin and the men who love their womenfolks, about the little comforts and convenience that make homes built from Bureau plans so desirable from a woman's point of view.

HARRIET S. FLAGG

## CO-PARTNERSHIP HOUSING IN THE UNITED STATES

In recent years there has been talk of trying in America the methods of co-partnership housing that have been prevalent in England for many years past and which have contained features that have proved attractive to students of housing betterment.

Until recently, however, there have been few practical demonstrations of the effectiveness of co-partnership housing in this country. The most recent of these is the Garden Homes project in Milwaukee, Wis. Acting under authority granted by the Wisconsin legislature in 1919 permitting cities and counties of that state to invest their funds in co-partnership housing schemes, the Garden Homes Company was organized in 1920 and investments of \$50,000 each were made by the city and county of Milwaukee. A 28-acre tract of land just north of the city limits adjoining a street car line was secured and was later annexed to the city in order that it might be provided with necessary improvements; 165 lots of 40 by 100 feet and over were laid out. Since that time work on the project has been progressing. At the present time 105 houses have been built. Of these 95 are completed and occupied, 6 more are practically completed and the remainder, it is expected, will be finished and ready for occupancy in about two months' time. As there are from 50 to 60 applications for houses pending these unfinished houses will be occupied as soon as the workmen are finished.

The plan adopted in Milwaukee has features that will be of interest to all students of housing development, and especially interesting at this time of great housing shortage when houses for workingmen are not being built in considerable number in any part of the country.

Management of the enterprise is vested in the hands of a Board of Directors selected by the holders of both the common and preferred stock on the basis of the shares held. Ultimately, as the preferred stock is retired it is said that the control will be vested in the holders of the common stock. When this happens all stockholders will have an approximately equal share in the company, as no one can own common stock in excess of the value of the house in which he is living. The city and county,



as contributors of financial support, each have representatives on the board of directors and the city's representative is the secretary of the company.

### THE SCHEME OF FINANCING

The capital stock of the company is \$500,000, equally divided between preferred and common stock. Shares have a par value of \$100. The preferred stock is held by investors and draws interest at 5%, while the common stock is held by the occupants of the houses and draws interest only if the company so determines. By investments of \$50,000 each, the city and county of Milwaukee each hold one-fifth of the preferred stock. Home occupants, instead of paying rent, make a subscription on the partial payment plan to the common stock amounting to the value of the house they occupy, and a charge to cover taxes, insurance, repairs, administration and interest on the preferred stock. There is no individual ownership of homes, but each occupant as a holder of common stock owns an approximate and equal share in the company. If a householder desires to sell his stock he may do so, giving the company a first option of 90 days to buy him out.

Interesting figures are furnished as to the workings of this scheme thus far by Mr. William H. Schuchardt, President of the Board of Public Land Commissioners of the city of Milwaukee and Vice-President of the Garden Homes Company, and for many years a leader in the cause of better housing in the city of Milwaukee.

Mr. Schuchardt states that in order to get the cost of the buildings down as low as possible they organized their own building crews and bought material in carload lots. As a result of these economies the complete cost of the 6-room houses including overhead charges was only \$3950, and of the 5-room houses \$3550 each. The lots, which averaged 40 by 100 feet, cost \$170 per lot without improvements and when the improvements are added, including sidewalks, sewers, water, gas, and electric lights the complete cost per lot it is expected will be \$750. Adding this to the cost of the building gives an approximate cost of house and lot at somewhat less than \$5,000 per house.

The rentals for the 5-room houses are \$44.50 to \$45 a month and for the 6-room houses \$47.50 to \$51 per month, the differ-



ences in price being due to differences in value in location.

These rentals cover various items which are given for a house in which the rent is figured at \$48 a month. These are the following:

Payment toward acquiring common stock.....	\$7.25
Interest on outstanding and subscribed for stock.....	19.58
Administration expense.....	2.00
Contingent Fund.....	4.00
City Tax.....	11.75
Repairs during first five years.....	.79
Depreciation first five years.....	.79
Disability and Accident insurance.....	1.17
Fire Insurance.....	.67
	<hr/>
	\$48.00

As the stock is being paid for, the interest on outstanding stock naturally decreases, Mr. Schuchardt adds, and when all the stock is paid for, monthly payments will be a few cents over \$21. It is assumed that after 5 years have passed repairs and depreciation will increase, depending on the manner in which the houses are used.

As indicative of the wide range of occupations which the occupants of the houses in this new development have may be cited the following information. Among the dwellers in this colony are the following:

8 machinists, 3 mail carriers, 3 surveyors, 3 engineers, 3 electricians, 2 carpenters, 3 shop clerks, 2 truck drivers, 2 office clerks. There are 60 other trades represented, such as hotel porter, cheese makers, moulders, boiler makers, steam fitters, tailor, &c. There is a life insurance agent, 2 foremen in factories, small store keepers, 1 dentist, 1 lawyer, 1 fire insurance agent, &c.

It is quite evident from this statement that the houses are being occupied by the so-called workingman, although of course it is not expected that a scheme of this kind can provide accommodations for the unskilled laborer earning not over 30c an hour.

While it is premature to reach any judgment as to the success of copartnership housing in the United States as evidenced by this venture, yet the results thus far achieved are gratifying. Mr. Schuchardt states that the tenants of the 95 houses already occupied are very much pleased with their

new homes, reporting that they have all paid more in the past for less attractive and less commodious homes and that they are particularly pleased with the coöperative features of the scheme; and that there has been developed as a part of it a remarkable community spirit in the group of people living in this settlement.

The future development of this effort to establish copartnership housing in the United States will be watched with great interest by all students of the housing question.

## STANDARDIZING BRICK SIZES

Another excellent piece of work done by Secretary Hoover's Department in eliminating waste in the building industry, has been the standardization of brick sizes brought about through the initiative of the Simplified Practice Division of the Department of Commerce. As a result of negotiations and research work carried on by that Division the brick industry has recently at one stroke been enabled to sweep away an odd variety of odd sizes of bricks and establish one standard size for the 7 billion building bricks that are produced each year in the United States. This standard is approximately  $8 \times 8\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$  inches. It is stated that the only exception now to be allowed in making brick in the future is in the case of smooth faced brick for special exterior use, in which a very slight variation in one dimension only is permissible.

With the government now definitely supporting the brick industry in its efforts to standardize its product it is expected that before long all specifications will call for standard sized brick, to the great benefit not only of the brick industry but to all users of its product.

Whether this standardization will result in reduced cost of brick to the consumer remains to be seen. That it should do so is without question.

## WHY LABOR IS SCARCE

With plasterers and bricklayers getting \$25 a day, it is not strange that no workingmen's dwellings are being erected at the present time in the United States. In some quarters the belief prevails that there is a monopoly of labor and that organized labor is doing its share of profiteering along with

the manufacturers of building materials and the contracting world, generally. This may be to some extent true, but the important factor in the labor situation is not merely the shutting off of the supply of labor due to restriction of immigration, though that applies largely to the unskilled trades, but the failure to train up apprentices in the more skilled trades.

Those most vitally interested in the welfare of the building industry have been conscious for some time past of this serious situation and have bent their efforts towards overcoming this difficulty.

No one has been more active in this field than D. Knickerbacker Boyd, the Philadelphia architect who has done so much to serve the building industry in its various branches.

Considering this question of apprenticeship and the lack of apprentices, Mr. Boyd recently had the following to say:

The difficulty seems to be, notwithstanding the two claims made, that the boys do not exist in sufficient numbers who want to learn the crafts and trades. The young men of today do not seem to want to enter what they consider the "laboring" field. So why go into protracted academic discussions as to who is responsible for the lack of numbers. We need to discover the cause of the lack of interest on the part of the boys.\*\*\*\*\*

The present difficulty does not rest so much with the boys, it seems to me, as it does with many of their parents, and with most of the educational systems of the country. Traced back into the homes of the children I really believe that the fault lies more with the mothers, sisters and sweethearts of the young men and boys, than it does with almost anyone else. These dear ladies, most of them, do not want to see their boys, brothers or "boy friends" dressed in overalls or the clothes of workmen, and littered with mortar, plaster, sawdust, metal filings or paint. They do not seem to like that and they therefore use their persuasion on their relatives and friends to keep them from training for or engaging in this sort of work.

As a means of encouraging young men to learn the building trade Mr. Boyd urges that the workers should be made to feel that their part as real factors in the success of any enterprise is recognized to greater extent than it is today. He believes

that if this is done the apprenticeship problem will largely solve itself.

Mr. Boyd makes an excellent suggestion in recommending to the American Institute of Architects that they prepare a document to be called the "Romance of Building" portraying the advantages of being a worker on a building and having an opportunity to cooperate with architects and other craftsmen in being of ever increasing service to the people of the country. If such a book were properly written so as to have all the interest of a popular story and then were made available to the schools throughout the country, Mr. Boyd is of the belief that there would be a very great increase in the number of apprentices in the skilled trades of the building industry.

## HEAT TRANSMISSION THROUGH WALLS

How thick must a wall be to keep fire from spreading to other buildings or to other parts of the same building?

The manufacturers of various kinds of building material have for many years stated what they considered was the fire resistant qualities of their particular material and the building codes of our different cities have imposed certain requirements as to wall thicknesses when materials of different nature have been used.

Until recently, however, there have been no well-founded principles based upon scientific study on which one could base conclusions as to the necessary thickness of such walls.

Often a fire finds its way through from one part of a building to another, either by causing cracks to appear in the wall and the flames penetrating, and sometimes by the complete failure of the wall itself which transmits heat so freely that the surface away from the fire becomes hot and in turn sets fire to inflammable substances near it or against it.

Lack of precise knowledge on these points has given rise to conflicting requirements for party walls and fire walls in different cities; those in certain cities often being required to be twice as thick as in others, while in other places such walls are not always made thick enough for safety, and in still others unnecessary material is built into them.

In order to learn what thickness is necessary the U. S. Bureau of Standards has been carrying on for the last 2 years a series of tests. Sections of brick walls 11 feet high and 16



feet wide have been fitted into one side of a large furnace and exposed to fires of intensity equal to those in burning buildings. Different kinds of brick were used and different thicknesses of wall; the brick were laid in different ways typical of the kinds of walls in general use. Ordinary cement lime mortar was used in most cases and the brick were of commercial grades used in representative localities. Care was taken to make these sample walls similar in workmanship and materials to those erected in actual practice. Elaborate provision was made for measuring the amount of heat transmitted through the walls during the tests and to observe cracks and deflections caused by the heat. The fires were kept up in the furnace 6 hours, this being at least 2 hours longer than the most persistent building fire usually lasts.

"Twenty-seven walls were tested in this fashion, of which 2 were 4 inches thick; 15 were 8-inch and 4 were 12-inch solid construction. There were also five 8-inch and one 13 inch hollow wall of brick, of the type known as the "Ideal" or all rowlock wall. Several of the walls were of cement brick and sand-lime.

"In all cases the heat of the furnace caused rapid expansion on the face next the fire and all the walls tested bowed in toward the furnace from  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to 9 or 10 inches at the center. Those restrained by surrounding construction deflected in general much less than those left free at the top and sides to move. In most cases this deflection partly disappeared when the wall cooled off, but the 4-inch solid and the 8-inch hollow wall and some of the other unrestrained walls retained permanently enough of this deformation to indicate the unfitness of such walls for further use after fire exposure.

"On the unexposed side of the walls, temperatures approximating those at which combustible materials ordinarily take fire were not reached within the 6 hour test except in the cases of the two 4-inch walls and the 8-inch hollow walls; the former transmitted enough heat to set fire to combustible materials in from 2 to 3 hours and the latter in from 5 to 6 hours. It was found, however, that fires in adjacent buildings may break out after the first fire has been extinguished due to the transmission of residual heat through the party walls.

"Temperatures in the centers of the walls rose to points threatening combustion of inflammable materials in much

shorter periods and point to the undesirability of inserting wooden joists in 8-inch walls to be used as fire walls. For this reason also 12-inch hollow walls should not be used for fire walls unless built solid at the floor lines where joists are inserted."

As a result of these tests there should be material economies in the construction of buildings in the future, and a revision of the building codes of most of our cities, by bringing them into harmony with the results of these tests, showing what walls will do in performance, rather than by determining standards through a rule of thumb method.

Once more the country is indebted to the U. S. Bureau of Standards for its valuable work in making available for both the trades interested and citizens generally the results of their careful, accurate and impartial study of materials.

## UNDERWEAR AND OVERCOATS FOR HOUSES

An ingenious advertisement in one of the technical journals under the caption "Underwear for Houses" calls attention to an insulating quilt applied to the outside walls and roofs of houses. It is claimed by the makers of this insulating material that as underclothing makes people warm because it prevents the heat of their bodies from escaping, it is possible to make houses warm in the same way.

This insulating quilt is said to reduce coal bills as the quilt insulates the house like a thermos bottle. Its insulating power is said to equal cork board and the thinnest grade of quilt is as warm as about 30 layers of cheap building paper. The manufacturers of it claim that it pays for itself in saving of coal in two hard winters and makes the house comfortable and healthful for all time. It adds that there are no cold drafts in a quilt-insulated house.

On the same principle it claims that this method makes houses cooler in summer, for it keeps the heat out in summer in the same way that it keeps it in in winter, by insulation.

As a further advantage of this style of construction, it is claimed to be both fire-resistant and sanitary. The quilt will not burn nor will it harbor insects or vermin and it will not rot.

If all that its makers claim for it is true, it would seem to fill a long-felt want in building construction and to point the

way towards a means by which houses can be constructed in future on a much cheaper basis than they are at present, and also materially reduce the cost of living.

The only question that arises in the mind of the housing reformer is whether there may not be a disadvantage in having houses so weather-tight, whether the compulsory and accidental ventilation and movement of air that is secured through air seepage which exists in most buildings, may not be an advantage to the health of the occupants of dwellings. The strength of our New England ancestors and their power to resist disease is attributable largely to the fact that despite their best endeavors to keep the cold air out, the rigors of their climate were such as to insure a free circulation of air in their houses at all times even with the windows nailed tight for the winter, as sometimes happened. There may be disadvantages in having houses too well insulated.

## HOUSE CONSTRUCTION AND HEATING COSTS

The increased cost of building along with the increased cost of coal and the difficulty of obtaining it, due to a series of strikes in the coal industry, have focussed attention anew upon the possibilities of reducing the cost of heating the ordinary residence building by better methods of construction, and by paying attention to the scientific principles involved in this question. Heretofore most of the ordinary houses have been built with little regard to this important question.

Particularly timely and valuable, therefore, is the report recently issued by the Engineering Extension Service of Purdue University at Lafayette, Ind., under the title "House Construction That Reduces Heating Costs" by James D. Hoffman and giving the results of the research work carried on in their laboratories.

The Report is intended to set forth some of the present weaknesses in framed-wall types of construction and to suggest reasonable modifications which may be recommended as substitutes for present building practice. Commenting on the cost of fuel spent by the people of the state of Indiana, it points out that approximately \$54,000,000 were spent in that state for domestic fuel during the year 1920, and estimates that, speaking conservatively, 10% of this could have been saved if the people of the state had been more careful in the operation of their residence



heating apparatus, adding that this refers only to the operation of the present heating plants as they now stand in the residences of the state, and raises the question of what would happen if the houses themselves were improved. The Report says:

No matter whether this is due to ignorance, indifference or to willful evasion, the average house is bristling with hidden defects which, if attended to at the proper time, could be eliminated with small additional expense. Having in mind only those reasonable improvements which should be made in every case, the yearly fuel bills in the average house might be reduced, because of house construction alone, fully 25%.

It is estimated that with such changes in building construction, the savings mentioned in the state of Indiana alone would amount to \$13,500,000 a year.

After pointing out that 40% of the heat used in heating a residence is lost through imperfect combustion, radiation and convection, and that that loss cannot be avoided, it takes up the question of what can be done with the other 60% of the heat. After showing how a large part of this heat is lost through walls, ceilings, and floors to the outside air, the Report outlines simple and practical methods of obviating much of this loss and discusses in detail these methods under the following heads: through the framed wall, through windows, through the attic floor, through chimneys, pointing out the proper methods of construction of all of these important parts of the building.

All architects and students of house construction should avail themselves of this extremely practical and valuable document.

## AIDING THE SMALL HOME BUILDER

The National Lumber Manufacturers Association has rendered a public service in its publication of two attractive and popular pamphlets on "Financing the Small Home" and "Planning and Designing Small Houses". The pamphlet dealing with the financing of the small home discusses the important question involved in this subject from the following points of view: The Family as Tenant or Home Owner; Methods of Financing; the Distribution of Expenses; Building Costs; Importance of Location and Zoning; Unit Method of Construction; Cost of Material; Why the Higher Cost of Home Building; How Much Should



a Home Cost; Second Mortgages; Building and Loan Associations; as well as various financial plans that have been adopted in different communities.

The pamphlet dealing with the designing of small houses discusses such questions as Good Architecture; Surroundings; the Importance of the Plan; Economy in Proper Sizes of Rooms; the Principles of Small House Design, and then discusses various questions having to do with the use of lumber in small house design going into details concerned with such questions as Siding; Sheathing; Studding; Roof Coverings; Porches; Interior Finish; Floors; Doors; Trim; Windows; Built-in Furniture &c.

All persons interested in the housing question will be interested in seeing these two practical and attractive pamphlets which can be obtained from the Association at International Building, Washington, D. C.

## HOW TO OWN YOUR HOME

If the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce had done nothing else but to publish the pamphlet "How To Own Your Home" it would have more than justified its existence. The Division, however, has a splendid record of achievement behind it during its brief career.

The new pamphlet represents many months of work in gathering the best information available throughout the country on the important subject of Home Ownership. This information has been presented popularly to the average man in terms that he can understand. To this pamphlet Mr. Hoover has appended a foreword, the text being written by Mr. John M. Gries, the Chief of the Division and his assistant Mr. James S. Taylor.

Opening with an introduction by Secretary Hoover the discussion of the subject is preceded by tables showing the extent of home ownership in the United States and the percentage of families owning their homes by Divisions and States in the census years, 1900, 1910 and 1920, with a second table showing the extent of home ownership in cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants in the same years—all taken from the census reports.

The pamphlet then discusses the following subjects:

Problems of Home Ownership, How Much to Pay for a Home, Written Agreements, Financing, Property Considerations, Location, House Plan, Quality of Construction, Buying or Building, Building a House, Buying the House, Maintenance Costs and Expenses of Home Ownership.

The Report contains an interesting Appendix containing tables and notes on the subject of Financing. One of these shows the income, the value of home and the typical annual expenses for a house and lot with a cash payment 20% of the total value; another shows the same facts with a cash payment 30% of the total value, and a third where the cash payment is 40% of the total value, all of these for homes costing from \$3,000 up to \$10,000 by \$1,000 variation.

Every person interested in housing should promptly obtain a copy of this valuable and interesting 30-page document. It can be obtained by sending 5¢ to the Superintendent of Documents at the Government Printing Office at Washington.

## THE MENACE OF THE ROOMER

Housing reformers have for many years realized the dangers of the lodger problem, but notwithstanding all that has been pointed out of these dangers the United States today stands convicted of having done less to remedy this housing evil than any other phase of the housing question. This has been partly due to the difficulties inherent in coping with it.

In recent years, with the universal housing shortage and the prevailing high rents and increased cost of building, it has not seemed expedient to attempt to deal with this belated question.

United States Senator Royal S. Copeland, New York's former Health Commissioner, who has at all times been keenly alive to the dangers involved in bad housing and who has repeatedly lifted his voice against them, recently in addressing a meeting of the Social Hygiene Society at Washington declared that citizenship, health and morality depended largely on the conditions under which people lived. After citing statistics as to the density of population in New York he added:

There is nothing more demoralizing than the necessity of having to take roomers into the home and it ought not to be necessary for any American family to have to swell its income in such a way.

## FLOORING MADE FROM LEATHER WASTE

A new type of flooring has recently come to public notice known as the Long Life Fibre Flooring. The principal ingredient of this is ground-up leather waste. It also contains

considerable vegetable fibre waste. The company manufacturing this product is said to have over 300,000 square feet in use in a number of industrial plants. It is claimed to be fire resistant to a remarkable degree, although impregnated with a coal tar waterproofing compound to drive off the moisture and prevent buckling in damp weather. New experiments with this material have made it possible to manufacture it in colors. The flooring is intended to be laid over wood floors or over concrete.

## A NEW KIND OF WINDOW

There has recently been placed upon the market a new type of window known as the Air-Way Multifold Window. This seems to be an admirable American modification of the attractive English casement window, but freed from the defects of that type.

The new window consists of two series of 4-sash each. One series folds to the right; the other to the left. In each series of sash, the sash hinged to the window casing opens first. Then the remaining sash slide toward this end as each one is opened, so that the entire window can be closed or can be opened in any one of 8 parts. To put it in a few words, the new window is a window based upon the same principle as that of the folding doors that are now becoming a common type for use in hotels and clubs where it is desired to have flexibility of use and throw two or even more rooms into one, or to separate larger rooms into smaller units. The new type of window seems to promise satisfactory results in affording increased ventilation and convenience of use.

## FARM CITIES

The latest development of the Garden City idea is a Garden City devoted entirely to agriculture. This is found in the proposal to establish farm cities in America sponsored by a corporation formed for this purpose and known as Farm Cities Corporation of America operating under a charter recently granted by the state of Delaware.

The promoters of this scheme are representative men of wide experience in public affairs and private business and the various professions and they have already availed themselves of the expert services of such men as Thomas Adams, John



Nolen and Raymond Unwin as to the soundness of their scheme.

Their plan is to lay out and build a "farm city" as a practical example of what may be done in combining the social advantages of a city with rural conditions. As expressed by one of the supporters of the plan, their purpose is:

In a nutshell, our problem is that of making agricultural life economically profitable and socially satisfying.

Farms are to be sold on long term payments as experience in land settlement has shown that the settler should make a substantial cash payment and that payment of the balance should be arranged on such reasonable terms that the money can be earned from farming operations. After the farmers are located on the land they will be given expert advice and guidance, not only in raising crops, but in the organization and management of efficient coöperative associations for buying and selling. Sanitation and health will be looked to by a central organization. Provision will be made for educational and recreational facilities.

The town center will develop as the farms are occupied and there will follow, to such an extent as seems desirable, the establishment of industries that will be complementary to agriculture. A proposed layout of such a city along the best accepted modern town planning lines has already been made by John Nolen for a tract of land in Pender County, North Carolina.

The development of this experiment will be watched with the greatest interest. Those who may wish to obtain further details of the scheme can obtain information at the office of the Farm Cities Corporation of America, 25 West 43rd Street, Room 1002, New York City.

## THE HOUSING SHORTAGE

The housing shortage still continues to exist from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast. Throughout every part of the country, reports come in from great metropolitan centers of population down to small towns and villages in rural and semi-rural districts, indicating that the housing shortage in some cases is as acute as it has been at any time in the past 5 years.



While it is of course true that conditions vary greatly in different parts of the country, that in some communities the housing shortage has been caught up with through new construction or through a shift in population or slowing down of industry in that community, in others the reverse is true so that a picture of the country today reflected by the news dispatches that come to our desk indicate that the housing shortage is still critical throughout the country generally.

It is not strange that this should be so in view of the high cost of construction and the well recognized fact that few houses have been built for working people notwithstanding the great building activity that has gone on for the past two or three years.

As indicative of the situation, but by no means in any sense intended to be a survey of the country or either complete or comprehensive, but only as showing how the wind blows, news dispatches have come to us indicating a serious housing shortage in the following states and cities:

In California, in Los Angeles and San José; in Connecticut, in Waterbury; in Illinois, in Moline; in Indiana, in the cities of Richmond, Muncie and Evansville; in Kansas, in Wichita; in Massachusetts—generally throughout the state, and more particularly in Worcester, Waltham, Lee, Lawrence, Palmer, Housatonic, Chicopee and Uxbridge. The situation in Boston is said to have improved.

In the state of Michigan, Detroit reports a serious shortage, also in Flint and in Sturgis. In Minnesota, both St. Paul and Minneapolis are said to be suffering from a lack of houses.

In Nebraska there is a shortage in Omaha; in New Mexico in Albuquerque; in New York State pretty generally throughout the state, notably in New York City, Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, Poughkeepsie, Elmira, Lockport, Mount Vernon, Watertown; in North Carolina in Asheboro; in Ohio in Akron, Dayton, Niles and Alliance; in Oregon, in Portland and in Bend; in Pennsylvania, particularly in the city of Philadelphia and also in Altoona, Monessen, Centralia and other cities; in Texas in Las Cruces; in Virginia, in Newport News and Pulaski; in Vermont the shortage is said to be general throughout the state; in the state of Washington in the town of Bellingham and in the District of Columbia—in the city of Washington itself.

## BOSTON STUDIES ITSELF ONCE MORE

Once again a group of persons interested in improving housing conditions in Boston has made a study of the existing conditions. One would think that having had the existing conditions reported upon almost *ad nauseam* the people in Boston interested in improving conditions would seek action and realize that the time for further investigation has passed; for, the conditions have been thoroughly known for the past 50 years and an investigation of housing evils is the last thing that that city needs.

Notwithstanding this fact, the Housing Committee of the Women's Municipal League last summer made a further intensive study of housing conditions in the South End. The general purpose of this inquiry, it is reported, was "to investigate housing and home conditions in a given district in their relation to health and family welfare and more specifically to secure information concerning upkeep and repairs of the tenement houses of the district as well as to ascertain the degree of natural light afforded during the day and the regularity of artificial light provided at night in the public halls and stairways." 110 separate tenement houses were inspected in the district in question which was occupied by Americans, Irish, Syrians, Italians, Russians and Austrian families and is said to represent the average home of the unskilled or semi-skilled worker.

As a result of this inquiry it is recommended that the streets in this neighborhood be kept clean and sprinkled, that garbage be removed, that there be larger window openings in the buildings, that hallway entrances and stairways be cleaned and that houses be renovated at least once a year by the owners.

It would hardly seem necessary to make an intensive study to discover these things, for they have been known to the people of Boston for half a century and in fact most of them are embodied in their legal requirements of the present day.

What Boston needs is not further research, but action.

## HOUSING IN NEW JERSEY

New Jersey is one of the few states where the State attempts to supervise housing conditions; California being the only other state where there is a well organized, equipped and reasonably financed official body charged with responsibility for the maintenance of proper housing conditions throughout the state.

The New Jersey Board of Tenement House Supervision was established about 20 years ago, following the success of the New York Tenement House Law and the establishment of the New York City Tenement House Department. During all that time the Board has done faithful and conscientious work in seeking to improve the conditions of New Jersey's tenement houses; as by the terms of the law its functions are distinctly limited to that class of building.

In its annual report submitted to the Governor a few months ago there is much to be gleaned as to the problems that confront a body of this kind and the work that may be accomplished by an active and enthusiastic state body.

Although inadequately provided with funds, and therefore necessarily inadequately staffed, for the responsibilities imposed upon it, the Board is, however, able to show a gratifying degree of accomplishment and one which reflects credit upon the State.

Not only is the Board charged with responsibility for the maintenance of proper conditions in the existing tenement houses throughout the state, but it is also charged with the duty of supervising the construction of new tenement houses and the alteration of existing ones. During the year 854 new tenement houses were thus supervised. These provide living accommodations for 8,315 families, or approximately 41,575 persons and were constructed at an estimated cost of \$29,942,000.

In addition the Board also supervised the material alteration of 373 existing tenement houses at an estimated cost of \$1,453,000.

In discussing the never ceasing burden of inspection of occupied buildings, the Board in its Report calls attention to what has become a truism in housing work, namely, the rapidity with which certain houses degenerate where the tenants are not careful in their habits.

The Report says:

We have in the course of our work found many houses put in shape and made spick and span by the owners, which in one month looked as though nothing had been done for a year or more. This condition is due generally to careless habits of the tenants rather than to neglect on the part of the owner.

In its efforts to maintain satisfactory conditions in the occupied buildings, the Board during the year made 6663 inspections and served 28,532 notices of violations, also making 82,858 re-inspections and secured compliance with the law in the case of 39,307 violations.



Dark rooms in 983 tenement houses were provided with windows in the partitions so as to borrow light and air from adjoining rooms, which have windows opening to the outer air; and encumbrances were removed from 2,097 fire escape balconies in compliance with the Board's orders.

During the year rubbish was removed from 1519 cellars and such cellars thoroughly cleansed. The halls, stairs and rooms in 3,413 tenement houses were cleaned and the walls and ceilings of rooms were cleaned and painted in 8,624 buildings.

During the year 601 buildings were unlawfully converted from private dwellings to tenement purposes and the Board states in its report that unless the owners promptly comply with the law they are in danger of prosecution. Other matters which had the Board's attention were the lighting of halls at night, the keeping of buildings in proper repair and the providing of adequate fire escapes.

The Board points out in its Report that the cost of each inspection was a trifle over 91¢ per inspection, all of which is a most creditable record. It is a source of regret that there are not more states in the Union like New Jersey which have thus shown a concern for the welfare of the great masses of people.

## GOVERNMENT HOUSING IN CALIFORNIA

Word comes from California that a movement is on foot to renew in the coming session of the legislature the effort that was made at the session of last winter to secure the enactment of a law which would establish government-housing in that state.

At the last session a bill to accomplish this was introduced by Senator Murphy but it died in committee. This measure has many novel features. Although defectively drawn, its purpose is quite evident; and that is, to put the State in the business of buying real estate and selling it on easy terms to people of small means.

The measure provides that any citizen of the United States—it is interesting to note that the person is not required to be a citizen of the state of California, in fact not even a citizen of the United States, if he has declared his intention of becoming a citizen—whose assets do not exceed \$1,000 and whose gross income does not exceed \$1800 a year and is prepared to enter upon occupation of the land within six months, may acquire from the State through the Commission of Immigration and Housing a home site which shall not exceed a cost of \$5,000. This would



seem to be rather an expensive price to pay for a lot, but we have always understood that they do things in a large way on the Pacific Coast!

The State acting through the Commission of Immigration and Housing is authorized under the terms of this measure to lend its funds to such a person at 5% per annum and through a 40-year period. The bill naively provides that the Commission in its discretion may postpone from time to time the whole or any part of the payment of the principal or interest. We can imagine the pressure that would be brought to bear upon a governmental commission subject to political control to allow in individual cases the postponement of payment of the annual interest.

The measure seeks to appropriate \$2,000,000 for its purposes, of which all but \$50,000 is to constitute a revolving fund for the purpose of building dwelling houses and acquiring land. The balance of \$50,000 is to be set aside for administrative purposes.

While the evident purpose of the measure is to develop home ownership among those people who are incapable of it, it is significant that the bill says nothing in any place about the building of houses but only about the acquiring of land and its sale, the only reference to a house being the provision that the person who gets the loan at this low rate of interest from the State shall agree to live upon the site and maintain his home in proper condition and not to sublet without the consent of the Commission.

This ill-considered, flimsy measure is a perfect illustration of the dangers that are involved in asking the State to undertake functions which it is quite unfit to perform. All students of government operation in practice should give their serious attention to this proposal. It is hardly conceivable that it will have any chance of passage at the next session of the California legislature, notwithstanding the reputation of that state for being hospitable to "progressive" movements.

## THE HORRORS OF RURAL HOUSING

### IN GEORGIA

When the housing reformer discovers windowless rooms in crowded city tenements he is not greatly surprised realizing that the pressure of population and the demand for living accommodations may easily result in such conditions. In fact there is one school of thinkers who would like to have the public believe that

all of the housing evils which are encountered in our cities are due to the land question.

It is enlightening therefore to find houses built in the mountain districts of Georgia with the nearest habitations in some cases miles away where there isn't a single window in the whole house.

A recent report on the subject of Maternity and Infant Care In a Mountain County in Georgia issued by the U. S. Children's Bureau, describes some habitations of this kind which are not only described but illustrated by photographs. Speaking on this subject the report has the following to say:

The lack of windows in a number of homes proved a defect more serious in lighting than in ventilation, for many houses were of such loose construction that fresh air came in through the crevices. In some of the dark rooms daylight could be seen through the unchinked logs or through gaps between the chimney and siding. Only 15% of the homes were ceiled or plastered, the remainder being boarded, roughly papered or without any interior finish. Where window frames were provided there was often no glazed sash, the openings being covered with wooden shutters.

This report of the Children's Bureau, like many of its predecessors, while disheartening in its statement of conditions discovered, is most enlightening in pointing out the conditions which require remedy and which are vital factors in advance in the child welfare movement.

The survey of this Georgia County, which was made primarily in a study of maternity and infant care, covered about 400 square miles in the southernmost extension of the Blue Ridge Mountain Belt among people Americans by birth and descent and sprung from English, Irish, and Scotch stock. At the time of the survey the County had approximately 2400 families and 12,000 inhabitants of whom about 1600 families including 8,000 persons were living in the open country.

The whole study is a most interesting one and all persons interested in child welfare will do well to obtain a copy of the Report from the Government Printing Office in Washington. It is known as Children's Bureau Publication No. 120.

To the average person it will be both a surprise and a shock to learn of the existence of not only windowless rooms, but windowless houses in the vast spaces of the open country, and also to learn of serious room overcrowding—in fact to find there practically all of the housing evils that one is accustomed to associate with the slums of great cities.

In the chapter of the report devoted to Housing and Sanitation it is pointed out that nearly three-fourths of the families were occupying small houses of one, two or three rooms; 68 families, or 14% of all visited were living in houses with but a single room, and the number of occupants in these houses ranged from 2 to 10 persons. In half the households limited to a single room there were 5 or more persons; and in the 2-room cabins, which housed one-fourth of the families, the living room was also a bedroom, with a lean-to for a kitchen, or there was a living-room kitchen with a smaller room adjoining for sleeping purposes. Only 5% of the homes had more than 5 rooms.

The Report points out that where there were but one or two young children the small house sufficed, but where there was a larger family cramped living quarters were common. Striking illustrations of this excessive room overcrowding are given in the Report.

In discussing in detail the crowding of sleeping quarters the Report states that from the standpoint of health this was a serious problem. In two-fifths of the homes visited there was but one sleeping room and it was not unusual to see 3 or 4 beds in the same room. No family had a spare room, very few a bedroom for each member and in more than 25% of the houses there were 5 or more persons per bedroom.

These conditions, as the Report suggests, were bad enough when the family was in health, but when there was illness in the family they became greatly worse because the sick member slept in the same room, often in the same bed, with those who were well. One case cited is that of a family of 10 persons occupying one bedroom, the 8 children, including a baby of 4 months, had whooping cough at the same time. During illness it is customary, the Report says, for neighbors to gather at the bedside of the sick person thus adding to the household congestion.

Commenting on the lack of privacy the Report states that this is another serious consequence of the crowded sleeping quarters for growing children of both sexes. It states an instance of a family of 10 consisting of father, mother, 3 girls aged 17, 13 and 8; 3 boys aged 16, 12 and 10 and 2 younger children limited to one bedroom.

Commenting on the sanitary facilities of these homes it was found that there was a general lack of toilets. The Report says:

"The general lack of toilets of any kind in the area indicated widespread ignorance of the essentials of home sanitation", and



pointed out that the rural residents of this mountain county like those in many districts of the rural south have not learned the dangers of soil pollution. The Report refers to the startling figures first brought to light by the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm Disease in 1914, that out of a quarter of a million farm homes in 11 Southern States, more than half were without privies or accommodations of any kind.

In this particular mountain county even a larger proportion of homes lacked this essential of sanitation, 85% of them being without toilets of any kind; of the privies provided at the remainder of the homes half were of the insanitary, open-back type.

The menace of disease through flies was greatly increased owing to this lack of toilet accommodations, the open-back privy and the disposal of waste water in the yards; but notwithstanding this only 31 homes had adequate screening. Equally serious conditions as to contamination of water supply were disclosed by the study. As was naturally to be expected there was an unusual amount of typhoid fever.

Altogether this picture of rural housing is not one in which the American citizen can take pride. The Children's Bureau is to be congratulated upon this frank presentation of a situation which calls for action.

## PENNSYLVANIA REGULATES ITS HOUSING

Acting under authority of power conferred upon it by law, the Department of Health of the State of Pennsylvania has recently upon recommendation of its Advisory Health Board adopted a series of Rules and Regulations governing tenements, lodgings and boarding houses.

These rules which are adopted for the "prevention of disease and for the protection of the lives and health of the people of the Commonwealth" apply to all second and third class cities and to boroughs, towns and townships of the first and second class throughout the state.

The new Regulations apply to tenements, lodging houses and boarding houses each of which is defined, very much in accordance with the customary definitions found in most tenement house laws and building codes.

The Regulations provide for adequate water supply, toilet conveniences and lighting and ventilation of rooms. A general drag-net clause also requires the owners of such buildings to keep them



in proper repair and in a cleanly condition at all times. The Regulations very properly differentiate between the requirements that are imposed upon existing buildings and upon buildings erected in the future. This has especial importance with relation to both water supply and lighting and ventilation.

While these Regulations could be very greatly improved and are defective as to precision of statement from a legal point of view, they do mark on the whole a very great advance and the State of Pennsylvania is to be congratulated upon having adopted a code of this kind which, if even only a first step can be hailed as a distinct step in advance.

## WASHINGTON'S ALLEY DWELLINGS REMAIN

In discussing Washington's alley dwellings in a recent issue of this journal, commenting on the makeshift law enacted by Congress for their vacation, we said:

The situation is obviously so impossible that it is freely predicted an injunction will be brought to restrain the Commissioners from enforcing the law.

This prediction has been fulfilled. Under mandate of the law ordering it to evict the 9,000 to 12,000 occupants of the Capital's 3,246 alley dwellings, the District government began proceedings against the owners of several alley houses. The latter at once took the matter into court and on July 23 secured a permanent injunction against the District Commissioners. Justice Bailey, of the District Supreme Court, in issuing this injunction said:

The bill alleges that these properties front upon alleys which are included in Provision Number One (for alleys less than 30 feet wide throughout their entire length) and Number Two (for alleys that do not run straight to and open upon two of the streets bordering the square), but which are supplied with sewer, water mains and gas lights (Provision Number Three) and that the premises themselves are supplied with sewer and water mains, but not with gas or electric lights. There is nothing in the statute which prohibits the use of property bordering on an alley where the alley is supplied with sewer, water mains and gas lights and it would be a forced construction of the statute to apply this provision to the premises rather than to the alley, in the face of the plain language of the statute. For these reasons I think the injunction should issue as prayed in the bill.

This was followed on September 8th, by a final decree issued by Justice Siddons enjoining the defendants, the District Commissioners, from taking any proceeding or action at law to declare these dwellings to be illegal or to render the occupation of them illegal under the laws (the so-called "Alley Bill".)

This puts the inhabited alley problem back to where it was in 1914, when Congress threw aside the bill carefully prepared by representatives of Washington's social and civic agencies, and substituted its "simple" statute supposedly ordering all alley dwellings vacated on a certain date—a date twice postponed because of the obvious impossibility of meeting it.

JOHN IHLDER  
Washington, D. C.

### "IN GOD'S COUNTRY"

California may be the nation's playground but it has some distance to go before it achieves distinction for its good housing.

We do not seem to profit much by others' experience. One might expect that our newer states with the lessons of the other states before them would have had the foresight to prevent the development of the kind of housing that had produced almost insoluble problems in our Eastern cities. Certainly a bit of vision plus action should have made impossible the kind of housing described and vividly illustrated in the "Ninth Annual Report of the Commission of Immigration and Housing of California".

Interior rooms, fire menaces of the worst sort, abominable toilet conditions, chicken houses used as dwellings, dark rooms, narrow shafts, room overcrowding, sleeping stalls in lodging houses, and an imposing array of disreputable shacks show how California, with her greater opportunities of providing comfortable living conditions for her people, has failed in exactly the same respects as our older communities.

"It should be mentioned", says the Report, "that in this state another myth retards the work of improving housing—the belief which is happily on the decline, that slum districts exist only in large cities in the East and that California is free from this evil. Almost every city, small as well as large, has a well defined slum district—its 'Below the Tracks', its 'Southtown', its 'Mexican Village'—in which men, women and children are trying to make homes of tumble-down, leaky, draughty, unspeakably dirty tenements and shacks and are failing miserably in the attempt."

Explaining why the immigration work and housing were placed under the same bureau, the Report says:

The close connection between the quality of housing and the quality of citizenship \* \* \* and the impossibility of improving the lives of our immigrants without improving their homes made housing a logical addition to the work of a Commission of Immigration. For, it was felt that unless it had supervision of the housing in the state, even though it controlled other phases of work for the immigrants, the Commission would be in the position of a man in a leaky boat who bends all his efforts to the plugging of all holes except one and leaves that one to do what harm it can.

The State Commission did not supersede the authority of municipalities, but was created rather to work through and with local authorities for the enforcement of state legislation. Since 1913 when the Commission was created, its work has been principally making surveys of the various localities in the state and urging the establishment of housing bureaus. Most communities had little knowledge of their bad housing and if they knew of the conditions, they ignored them. It was the function of the Commission to awaken these towns and to urge them on to action.

Unquestionably the Commission has done much effective work. "Slowly, but very steadily", says the report, "the conception of better housing as a far-fetched theory of enthusiasts was changing to the realization that it is a legitimate and necessary work of every city government."

In 1916 the Commission organized a Housing Institute, bringing together groups interested in housing legislation. Amendments of the State Tenement Law and Hotel Law and also a proposed Dwelling House Law were placed before the Institute and approved. These new laws and amendments proposed among other things to give the Commission power to enforce the laws in certain cases where local authorities failed. They were enacted in 1917.

The 1917 Legislature also gave the Commission additional powers including investigation of housing finances, taxes, Zoning, plans for increasing the supply of wholesome homes and assisting communities in city planning.

Several cities in the state are making progress in city planning. In some of the fruit districts of the state minor attempts have been made at industrial housing with the encouragement of the state. Perhaps the most marked progress has been made in the



labor camps in which housing conditions of the most disgraceful type are gradually being replaced by much improved construction.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Cincinnati

## THE NEGRO MIGRATION TO PHILADELPHIA

Southern Negroes are migrating to Philadelphia at the rate of 10,500 a year, according to an estimate given by the Negro Migration Committee of Philadelphia, which is composed of representatives of various organizations interested in social service questions and which has been studying the various aspects of this problem for the past four months.

This estimate is based upon a study of 931 properties and a supplementary study of 1,282 individuals recently arrived. This gain in Philadelphia's negro population represents one-third of that city's normal yearly increment for all races; and, compared with the normal yearly increment of negro inhabitants, is an increase in negro population of 200% over the past year.

The Committee states that apparently proximity to the North is a factor in this migration, for the largest number seem to be coming from Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, in the order named. These migrants seem to be of a high type, about 90% of the adults are church members, and about 36% belong to fraternities having welfare and benefit features; all seem to have steady work, and many have ready funds with them.

A horde of newcomers of this type would offer no economic problem to Philadelphia, where their labor is undoubtedly an asset, were it not for the fact that Philadelphia is not equipped with proper housing facilities to care for these migrants. Occupancy of insanitary and poorly equipped premises, and room-overcrowding are causing a grave health menace to Philadelphia today.

Families are going into premises already occupied, either as householders in one or two rooms, or as lodgers. One four-room house was found occupied by four new families, one family consisting of a man, his wife and six children. Another six-room house was found with five families, and within two weeks the house next door which had been occupied by one family had



increased to three-family occupancy. Still another house added to its normal population migrant families until 16 families occupied 18 rooms. Above a small garage 16 migrants were found living in one room. The house has neither yard nor toilet, and filth and waste are thrown into an open lot adjoining. In many of these houses thus converted to multiple occupancy, the sanitary equipment is sub-standard and does not comply with Philadelphia housing laws.

No better evidence is needed to show the persistent menace from such overcrowding than the almost superhuman efforts which the Division of Medical Inspection of the Bureau of Health has put forth to prevent the development of a small-pox epidemic threatened by the recurrence of small-pox cases among colored migrants in overcrowded and insanitary houses. Within 8 months there have been 49 cases of small-pox in Philadelphia and the Medical Inspectors have been obliged to quarantine 46 different districts and to vaccinate every unvaccinated resident, the total number of persons receiving this treatment during the last four quarantines was 2,780. Every one of the small-pox cases found in these districts was a negro recently arrived from the South. In one house occupied by 38 recent arrivals seven cases were found.

Philadelphia little appreciates the saving to the public from this loathsome disease which the City Medical Inspection through their quarantines have attained. The 42 small-pox cases widely separated were not all brought from the South, but developed among Southern negroes after they had reached Philadelphia, through contact with cases arising through congested occupancy.

The Committee studying this migration is urging City Council to put 10 more housing inspectors at the disposal of the Division of Housing and Sanitation of the Bureau of Health in order that more effective inspection may be done by the city, and room overcrowding reduced. The Committee is also endeavoring to increase the housing facilities of Philadelphia by the renovation and rehabilitation of old properties, at present not in the market, and by furthering plans for the construction of low-priced homes, durable and sanitary, which will be within the reach of small-wage earners.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

## NATION PLANNING

Just as the idea of Regional Planning is beginning to take hold in this country, we find our imagination challenged by a scheme for a great nation plan embracing the entire country put forward by Warren H. Manning the well known City Planner.

In what Mr. Manning calls a "National Plan Study Brief" he outlines a scheme for a nationwide organization to be known as a National Plan Committee who will volunteer constructive service in the development of a nation plan.

In this brief which Mr. Manning has developed most interestingly, he presents such questions as World Studies, the Economic Side of the Problem, the Country's Natural Resources, Its Power, Its Inter-Communication, Its Harbors and Waterways, Its Railways, Its Highways, Its Airways, Its Trunk-Line Traffic Tracks, Its Terminals, Population, Scenic and Recreation Values, National Reservation System, Pleasureways.

Accompanying this "Brief" are a series of remarkable maps showing the Topography of the Country, Crop Regions, Forest Areas, Rainfall, Improved and Unimproved Land, Soils in Relation to Agriculture, Factory Centers, Coal and Lignite Deposits, Peat Deposits, Water-Power, Railroads, Commercial and Recreation Areas and Connecting Ways, Rural Population, National and State Forest Reservations, &c.

Speaking of the need of a National Plan Mr. Manning says:

Plans for city growth must be a part of the greater plans of the states and the nation. Cities represent the centers of wide regions and the terminals of National Thoroughfares. Much of the city planning, even of recent date, will need to be restudied to more effectively take advantage of land units that are tributary to the city, and upon which the city's property will depend. A first essential is that the National Plan Study shall go far enough to determine upon lands that ought to be, and that can now be, set aside in anticipation of the future needs.

Our country should be marked off into districts according to best use. In such districts all harmful developments should be prevented, and all favoring works encouraged. This means a restudy of city and state plans to bring them in a line with the National Plan. No really comprehensive plan studies have yet been made, and they can not be wisely made until the logical relation of the state unit to the great national units can be better determined from a National Plan Study. To develop our land units and water resources to the best advantage, more states must act together where

there is a divided authority over river, harbor, swamp, and park projects. Wisconsin and Minnesota have done this in setting aside an Inter-state Park at Taylors Falls. New York and New Jersey have done this in establishing the Palisades Interstate Park, and also in the study of their adjoining harbors. Several other states are doing this in the great Colorado River power development, irrigation, and flood control project.

If more of the natural divides between river basins could have been made the boundaries between states, so as to give a state full control of a watershed, and if the state lines were carried down to water power centers or to the heads of navigation, it would have been an economic advantage.

With a definite coordinated plan for the development of our resources and peoples, in which we all can take part, we shall enter a new era of progressive growth.

## A PIONEER IN REGIONAL PLANNING

### BOSTON

Regional Planning is now an established fact in the Metropolitan District of Boston, which embraces an area of about 400 square miles, and includes a population of considerably over a million. This population is not embraced by a single city or by a city possessing a few contiguous closely built urban areas, but is distributed in 39 cities and towns which are separated by intervals of from 2 to 6 miles.

All these communities have their own local city or town government and they are politically distinct from Boston. They are not even united by a common county. A glance at the map showing the railways, waterways, the waterfront, and the highways of these communities indicates that the apparently independent units are really united by common physical ties of a binding and unifying kind.

A review of the intimate and vital contacts which have occurred during the last 50 years between these cities and towns about Boston indicates the course of one of the first great Regional Planning movements which this country has witnessed. At no time during this period did the public see clearly the full significance of the series of separate epoch-making plans, each of which seemed sufficiently inclusive and for the moment final. The term epoch-making may be rightly applied to these plans, as they were new in this country, if not in the world. They involved novel legislative enactments in a community of cities and towns which were politically separate.



When Boston and the towns about it were settled, good water for drinking purposes was found in the rivers, springs and in driven wells. For 200 years this supply was reasonably satisfactory, although the sewage of these towns was returned to the ground through cesspools, or was drained into the rivers and harbors. In the course of time, however, the individual sewage-disposal systems of each town became a menace to towns lower on the watersheds, but the towns could not abate the nuisance. They were unable to secure sewer outfalls within their own boundaries, and they could not pay the cost of separate sewers leading to the sea. Finally, in this crisis, the communities were led by common necessity about 1880 to secure legislative authority to plan and to build, under a Metropolitan Sewer Commission, trunk sewers for the use of the entire region. These great works accomplished their purpose.

Within 10 years, however, the water supply systems of these many communities showed new troubles. Sufficient water could not be found in the rivers, springs and wells or in the local ponds and reservoirs to supply the needs of the rapidly growing population. The city of Boston was rich enough to build an aqueduct for its own use, but the surrounding cities and towns could not afford independent supplies brought from a distance. In this new crisis the community was forced again to resort to a special Commission to plan and to build under legislative act a water supply system upon which Boston and all the other communities (except three or four, whose local water supplies were still adequate) could depend. This labor which involved the building of great aqueducts, drains and vast storage reservoirs, provided one of the largest and best equipped systems of water supply in the country.

The planning and the construction work of still a third Commission appointed by the legislature for the welfare of this group of 39 cities and towns, brought into existence during the nineties a system of Metropolitan Parks and Parkways. Without limitation by the local boundary lines of these cities and towns, a system of public recreation areas of about 10,000 acres was acquired. The shores of many streams, ponds and ocean beaches were saved from unsanitary development and devoted to public use. These great parks were planned to form a united system with the local parks. Together, they constitute one of the finest recreation systems of the world.

In 1907 still another Commission was appointed by similar legislation to study and report on the general planning of the



Metropolitan District. This Board, known as the Metropolitan Improvements Commission, was not made permanent and ceased to function when its report was submitted. The Report which appeared in 1909 was the first comprehensive plan which had been prepared for any great Metropolitan area. It included among other matters the development of the railroad facilities, terminals, docks and a system of main thoroughfares. The latter was based on an intimate study of all the streets of the area and was made possible by the interest of the local city engineers. Boards of Trade, and the few local Planning Boards which had been appointed then. A crisis in transportation did not exist at that time, however, and for that reason the findings of the Board were not crystallized in actual construction work, though the report formed a useful commentary on the needs of each community.

The rapid increase in the number of State Commissions on Metropolitan matters led during the next decade to consolidation of these Boards. One of these, the Metropolitan District Commission, took over the functions of the sewage, the water, and the parks boards, thus combining in one group the three organizations whose accomplishments are outlined above.

The development of automobile traffic, and the consequent changes in trolley and steam transportation, created within 15 years a crisis in Boston and its vicinity which again called for combined action of the cities and towns regarding transportation. Though each community was organized with its own local planning authorities, these Boards found themselves powerless to cope with the baffling motor vehicle traffic problems which originated beyond their own boundaries. Street widenings sufficiently ample to accommodate this stream of vehicles created local burdens which could hardly be borne.

Moreover, there was no way to decide what streets should be widened since no surety could be found, that the thoroughfare improvements of one community would coördinate with the improvements made by the adjacent series of towns lying on the same general traffic route. The remedial work already accomplished by the State Boards of Public Works, Public Utilities, and other organizations, indicated clearly that a properly constituted permanent Commission on Metropolitan Transportation would be effective in determining these main vehicular routes, coördinating their width and direction, and in arranging for their construction and financing. That similar powers should be delegated to such a

Board in connection with steam trolley, and water transportation was also clear.

The need of legislation to bring about this planning machinery was generally appreciated throughout the state. All organizations interested in the welfare of the District took active part in crystallizing public opinion. Among these organizations the local Chambers of Commerce, led by the Boston Chamber, carried on an active campaign through special and general committees. Hearings were held by the legislature. Methods of relief were so well formulated and so convincingly presented, that appropriate legislation in May of this year brought about the formation, within the Metropolitan District Commission, of a Division of Metropolitan Planning.

This Division which is permanent, consists of 7 members, 3 of whom, including the Chairman, are appointed by the Governor, and the remaining 4 are appointed from the following Boards:—The Massachusetts Public Works Department, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, the Metropolitan District Commission, and the Transit Division of the Boston Public Works Department.

The members were named in August and are: Henry I. Harri-man, Chairman, A. C. Ratshesky, Vice Chairman, Ralph S. Bauer, Richard K. Hale, Department of Public Works, Everett E. Stone, Department of Public Utilities, Frank G. Hall, Metropolitan District Commission, and Francis E. Slattery, Transit Commission. The Board has organized and has engaged the services of Edwin H. Rogers, Engineer, and Arthur A. Shurtleff, Consultant on Town Planning and Highway Transportation. Many hearings have been held, and the Board is actively collecting data regarding all the problems which are presented under the act of appointment.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF  
Boston

## OHIO STARTS REGIONAL PLANNING

Following the example set by New York and other states, the Ohio Legislature at its last session enacted a law drafted by Alfred Bettman of Cincinnati and sponsored by the Ohio State Conference on City Planning which paves the way for Regional Planning in that state. Under the new law a Regional or County Planning Commission will be authorized to make plans and maps

of the region or county showing recommendations for systems of transportation, highways, park and recreational facilities, water supply, sewers and sewage disposal, garbage disposal, civic centers and other public improvements which affect the development of the region as a whole or more than one political unit within the region, and which do not begin and terminate within the boundaries of a single municipality.

Following the English precedent, it is provided that the plans thus prepared may be adopted by any local City Planning Commission of a given municipality in so far as such plans affect its jurisdiction and that thereafter that plan shall have the same force and effect within that municipality as is now provided by law for plans adopted by the local City Planning Commission.

A very important feature of the new law is a provision to the effect that in territory outside of municipalities within the county, where such a regional plan has been adopted, no public building, roadway, bridge or viaduct or other public improvement or utility whose construction would constitute a departure from the plan shall be permitted or authorized by the County Commissioners except by unanimous vote. Students of Regional Planning will undoubtedly find it advantageous to study carefully this new Ohio law, copies of which can presumably be obtained from Mr. Bettman in Cincinnati.

## REGIONAL PLANNING IN CALIFORNIA

That movements for Regional Planning are by no means confined to the East is evidenced by the action taken in Los Angeles some months ago in the appointment of a Regional Planning Commission of 5 members by the County Board of Supervisors. This Commission is to act in an advisory capacity to the county officials in exactly the same way as local City Planning Commissions act in the several neighboring municipalities with relation to their local governments.

In addition the Regional Planning Commission is directed by the ordinance under which it is appointed to coördinate, so far as possible, the programmes for the physical development of these municipalities, thus constituting a Metropolitan District for the county, in so far as the territory which intervenes between these municipalities is concerned. Among the problems which this new Commission will undoubtedly find it necessary to take up are problems of sanitary drainage, sewage disposal, flood abatement and similar cognate problems.



## 22,000,000 PEOPLE LIVE IN ZONED CITIES

More than 22,000,000 people, comprising 40% of the urban population of the United States, live in 183 Zoned cities, towns and villages, according to a statement made public recently by the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce.

During the first eight months of this year 54 municipalities, with more than 6,500,000 population, have adopted Zoning ordinances. This indicates the greatest progress in Zoning that has ever been made during a similar period. More than two-thirds of the 183 Zoned municipalities have been Zoned since September, 1921.

Neighborliness in the use of land is said to be the keynote of Zoning. The home owner is protected from the intrusion of the junk yard which for no good reason might be moved into his neighborhood, and business and shopping districts are protected against noisy factories. Industrial plants have greater freedom in selecting sites convenient to good transportation.

Revised figures show that on January 1, 1923, 129 municipalities had adopted Zoning regulations. During the year, 54 more, some large and some small, located North, South, East and West, have been added to the list. Of the 68 cities in the United States with over 100,000 population, 36 have Zoning ordinances in effect. Chicago, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Mo., Seattle, Providence, Columbus, Worcester, Grand Rapids and Youngstown are among the larger cities which have adopted Zoning ordinances this year. The smallest community to adopt a Zoning ordinance in 1923 had only 420 inhabitants, according to the latest census. Twenty-one towns and villages of less than 10,000 inhabitants adopted Zoning regulations in 1923. Seventeen communities with 10,000 to 50,000 population, and 16 cities with more than 50,000 population also Zoned during the year.

In the number of places Zoned, New Jersey leads with 51; New York is second with 30; Illinois, third, with 23; California, fourth, with 17; Ohio, fifth, with 13; Massachusetts, sixth, with 11; Wisconsin, seventh, with 10; and Missouri, eighth, with four. Indiana, Kansas and Michigan have three each; Rhode Island and Washington have two each; and Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Virginia have one each. The District of Columbia also is Zoned.



More new state Zoning enabling legislation has been passed in 1923 than usual, and the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act which was prepared by the Department of Commerce, was used to a greater or less extent in most of the laws. Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Wyoming passed important Zoning enabling acts, and a number of other states passed legislation supplementing or amending existing laws. The State of Wisconsin has passed an act granting to counties the power to Zone.

A complete list of zoned municipalities, as of September 1, 1923, with references to the state acts under which zoning is permitted, may be obtained from the Division of Building and Housing of the Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

## ZONING FOR JAPAN

"How far a candle sheds its rays" is again illustrated by the information that comes to us that Japan, just before the great disaster which recently overtook it, had completed a very thorough investigation of New York's Zoning system and as a result of the study of this system made by a Committee of 3 Japanese who visited New York, legislation was enacted by the Japanese national legislature applying the principles of Zoning to several large cities and later the Government advocated extending this law to all cities with a population of 50,000 or more.

It is to be hoped that Japan will take advantage of the great disaster which has overcome her principal cities and profit by the failure of America to profit by a similar disaster in San Francisco some years ago.

The new San Francisco could have been a perfect city but the conflict of private interests and the haste to resume normal operations of industrial life made the residents of that city give little heed to the wise and sound advice that was proffered them by persons who knew from the experience of the world how important it was to build cities according to sound principles.

It is hoped that the Oriental mind will prove wiser than the Occidental mind. It would be a most fitting comment upon the attitude of California toward the Japanese if Japan were to give California an object lesson in this regard.

## ZONING IN SINGAPORE

That the Zoning movement has great vitality and commends itself quickly to all persons of understanding is evidenced by the news which comes to us through private correspondence that Zoning has been taken up actively in Singapore and that a pamphlet on the subject of Zoning and the Proposed Town Plan for Singapore is now being printed in Chinese.

The chief proponent of Zoning in Singapore is Captain Richards, Deputy Chairman of the Singapore Improvement Trust. After many years of intense propagandist work Captain Richards has been instrumental in securing the enactment of a government bill for town planning and the improvement of Singapore in the drafting of which he was one of the chief agents. This new bill has been recently approved by the Municipal Council of Singapore. As a result of these years of effort the city is now quite enlightened on the subject of Zoning and all building plans have to be passed by Captain Richards as Deputy Chairman of the Singapore Improvement Trust before they are sanctioned by the Municipal Council.

As indicative of the thoroughness of the educational work that has been done, it is interesting to note that the press of Singapore has published during the last three months 21 different articles, all in behalf of the new bill.

## EDUCATING A STATE IN ZONING

The Bureau of Municipalities of the State of Pennsylvania, of which J. Herman Knisely is the experienced and efficient Director, has rendered a great service to the cause of Zoning and City Planning in that state, and in fact to the whole country, through the issuance of a series of bulletins on City Planning affairs issued from time to time and given wide circulation among city officials and others in the state of Pennsylvania who would have an interest in the contents of these bulletins.

While it is to be regretted that the exigencies of appropriation limitations have not permitted the Bureau to print these valuable and interesting bulletins, yet even in their multigraphed form they have rendered a very great service, and it is hoped that the Bulletin will be continued indefinitely and published in more attractive form in the near future.

Thus far 8 such bulletins have been issued. They are all issued as bulletins of the Association of City Planning Commissions of Cities of the Third Class of which Mr. Leo J. Buettner, the very efficient secretary of the Johnstown City Planning Commission is Secretary, and who undoubtedly bears a large degree of responsibility for the effectiveness of these bulletins.

The idea of issuing a series of bulletins of this kind was evolved at a conference of representatives of City Planning Commissions of cities of the third class held in Harrisburg last January at which time it was voted that a permanent organization of these Commissions be created and that bulletins covering their work be issued from time to time.

As showing the extent of the spread of the City Planning movement in Pennsylvania, it is significant that last March of the 38 cities of the third class in that state, 27 then had City Planning Commissions.

The City Planning Commissions whose work has been reported on in the bulletins thus far issued have relation to the following cities: Johnstown, Erie, Harrisburg, Altoona, Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, McKeesport, Monongahela City, Reading, Sharon, Williamsport, Bradford, Chester, York and Oil City.

Three of the Bulletins thus far issued have especial interest for the readers of this magazine; that issued under date of April 30th contains a series of admirable suggestions for procedure in Zoning including a copy of the Enabling Act passed by the 1923 legislature; another Bulletin gives an abstract of the City Planning legislation passed by the 1923 legislature; and a third summarizes, with copious extracts from editorials, the attitude of the Pennsylvania press toward City Planning and City Planning Commissions.

All students of Zoning and City Planning will find it profitable to obtain copies of this series of Bulletins, if copies are still available, for which they should write to Mr. Knisely at Harrisburg.

An indication of the interest that exists in the subject of City Planning in the state of Pennsylvania is found in the bill introduced at the last session of the legislature (but which failed of passage) compelling all cities of the third class to appropriate annually at least 1/20th of one mill on each dollar of the city's assessed valuation for the support of the work of the local City Planning Commission to cover its annual operating expenses. The proposed measure also enlarged the powers and authority of local City Planning Commissions. This measure will undoubtedly be renewed at the next session of the Pennsylvania legislature.



## THE YOUTHFUL ZONER

In an effort to inform the rising generation as to the importance and value of Zoning an interesting piece of educational work has been carried out recently in Norfolk, Va., where a prize essay contest for school children on the subject of Zoning and City Planning was announced.

The children were allowed to choose between the following subjects:

Why Should Norfolk Be Zoned?

Why Should Norfolk Have a City Plan?

What Elements and Factors Should Enter into Norfolk's City Plan?

What Will Be the Probable Results of Planning and Zoning Norfolk?

Prizes of \$10 each were offered for the best essays in each of 5 different classes, the classes being arranged to eliminate competition between white and negro pupils and to make it possible for each child to compete against children of about his or her age.

All essays were written in the class-rooms as a part of the English work. In order to eliminate any question of unconscious favoritism, the children wrote under assumed names, following the custom of architectural competitions. The final judging of the essays was had by a committee made up of the President of the Council—the equivalent of the Mayor—the Editors of two leading newspapers, the President of the Housewife's League and the President of the Local Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

In addition to the notice of the 5 prize winners, announcements were made in the newspapers of honorable mentions and the writer of the best essay from each school. One of the local papers published the prize winning essays—one each day, and also published the pictures of several of the prize winners. Considerable comment was made as to the high standard of the essays considering the ages of contestants, it being pointed out that the children seemed to have grasped the fundamental ideas quite satisfactorily.

One of the purposes behind this contest was to stimulate the parents of children to consider the subject, those responsible for



the project realizing fully that the children would naturally ask their parents to tell them what they knew about the subject and that the parents would then be put to it to find out a little bit about it themselves. In developing this educational scheme the public libraries of the city cooperated fully and explanatory pamphlets and books were made available at the various branch libraries.

The city of Chicago has been doing work of this kind through the public schools for nearly 10 years now in educating the new generation as to the importance and value of the Chicago City Plan.

With such work made general throughout the country there will be built up in a few years a vast body of informed and intelligent public sentiment that will regard the old haphazard way of building cities as something to be ashamed of. The results that should flow from this training of the young idea, at a formative period, to consider the important questions that are involved in city development are literally incalculable.

## PLATTING REGULATIONS

The award in the F. B. Williams City Planning Prize Essay Competition for 1923, has recently been made to Tracy Baldwin Augur of the Harvard Town Planning School.

In accordance with the terms of the competition, Mr. Augur has written an essay on the subject of the Laws and Regulations Relating to Platting of Land in the United States as Affecting the Desirability of Lots for Dwelling Purposes.

In this essay, which has been published in the October issue of *Landscape Architecture* Mr. Augur discusses with an understanding knowledge of the principles involved the question of Subdivisions and Plats in relation to the fundamentals of best town planning practice.

With the body of platting regulations that is being built up and becoming controlling in so many communities, having all the force of statute law, a consideration of the principles which should govern such regulations is most timely.

In his essay Mr. Augur says:

Platting regulations seek to accomplish two ends: First, so to control the layout of new streets that they will form useful members of the city street system at such time as they are incorporated into it, and second, so to regulate the subdivision of the blocks demarcated by such new streets that the lots will be amenable to good individual development, and will not by their size or shape

encourage uses inimical to the best interests of the city at any future time.

All persons interested in City Planning, Zoning and Subdivision work will find it worth while to read this interesting article of Mr. Augur's.

## A SUBDIVIDER'S MANUAL

The county of Los Angeles has recently published a "Subdivisions Manual" which has been distributed to City Engineers, Planning Commissions, private engineers, and land owners in the metropolitan district surrounding the city of Los Angeles.

The Manual represents the results of several years study of the questions involved in Subdivision work and an attempt has been made to work out a standardized practice and standardized requirements or regulations under a given set of conditions. In view of the rapidity with which raw land is being developed and subdivided into urban territory, these new requirements become of especial importance.

Copies of the Subdivisions Manual can in all probability be obtained from G. Gordon Whitnall, Director of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission.

## UNIFORM SYMBOLS FOR ZONING MAPS

With the development of the art of Zoning, Zoning practitioners in the United States have for some time past considered the desirability of adopting a uniform system of symbols for use in Zoning maps.

While this subject has been informally discussed at meetings of the Town Planning Institute of the United States and among Zoning Consultants whenever they have gotten together, no definite action has as yet been taken.

Now comes a constructive scheme for the adoption of such a system of symbols, worked out in great detail by Noulan Cauchon in connection with the studies that Mr. Cauchon is making of the Zoning of his own city of Ottawa, Canada.

Mr. Cauchon has for many years been a thoughtful student of all phases of Town Planning and in a scholarly and informative paper on the Zoning of Ottawa in which the fundamental principles of Zoning are very effectively discussed, Mr. Cauchon presents a constructive plan for the use of a system of symbols

in zoning maps. Accompanying his paper is a chart showing his scheme in color.

In discussing this scheme of symbols Mr. Cauchon has the following to say:

A chart accompanying this memorandum illustrates a constructive system of basic classification symbolism. It enables the easy recording and recognition on Zoning charts of the status and the permissibility in the use and development of land.

The basic symbols have been designed to afford simplicity in use and understanding. They are constructive multiples of a simple stroke, straight or wavy, varied in direction as to meaning.

The distance between the line groupings may be varied to suit scale of chart. Minor differentiations and special symbols may be introduced between the basic single or grouped line symbols.

The symbols retain their definition under a wide range of scale and reduction and further permit of easy reproduction in black and white.

## COLORS

The solar spectrum has been adopted as a color scheme and graduated in co-ordination with the basic Home and Work classification symbols.

This color scheme is devised and recommended for amplifying the visualization of the charted records.

The colors as indicating status and restrictions of permissibility are co-ordinated to correspond under similar equivalents of Minimum, Mediate and Maximum Home Density or of Work Intensity.

A symbol, or its corresponding color, indicates in each case, according to disposition, the relative status obtained and what is permissible under the varying circumstances.

The nature of things and the inherent properties of each grouping are shown in colors as follows:

For Home District	Minimum, in red
Density	Mediate, in orange
	Maximum, in yellow
For Work District	Minimum, in green
Intensity	Mediate, in blue
	Maximum, in violet

Note: the six colors can be reproduced by three printings.

## APPLICATION OF SYMBOLS AND COLORS

The Status of land, as actually used and developed, shall be indicated on the charts by applying the relative symbols or colors to the interior portions of lots, blocks or areas.

A permissible classification for the future, with continuity of status

or otherwise shall be indicated on the charts by applying these relative symbols or colors to outer borders of lots, blocks or areas.

Institutions shall be indicated by their given vertical symbols used relatively, similarly to those indicating status and permissible use and may moreover be shown in combination with the former.

Noxiousness, shall be indicated in its relative degree by the given horizontal symbols, singly, in combination with the others or superimposed as may be.

Temporary Condition shall be indicated by the symbol of its relative classification, shown in wavy lines.

Lack of space prevents us from giving here in full all of these most interesting suggestions, but students of Zoning will find their time more than repaid by getting Mr. Cauchon's original suggestions as contained in the *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada* for September.

It is to be hoped that the suggestions thus offered in this constructive scheme may be carefully considered by the Town Planning Institute of Canada and at the same time by the Town Planning Institute of America and of England so that ultimately an International scheme of symbols for Zoning maps may be adopted. With the spread of the Zoning movement it would seem as if the time had come for the adoption of such a scheme.

## ZONING OTHER THINGS THAN BUILDINGS

A striking tribute to the success of the principles of Zoning as applied to buildings, is found in the increasing degree to which the idea of Zoning, namely, the intelligent differentiation of the different districts of the city, is furnished by a suggestion that street lighting improvements of a city should be similarly zoned.

Pointing out the great waste that is involved in the present method of street lighting and the lack of adaptation of the lighting facilities of a city to the needs of the different sections of that city, Charles J. Stahl in a recent issue of the *American City* points out the great advantages to be obtained in not merely zoning the lighting facilities of a city, but developing them in connection with a comprehensive plan of city development. He says:

Putting into effect the practice of designing street-lighting systems along with zoning or expansion plans, permits standardization, simplified supervision, reduced maintenance costs, and the most efficient arrangement for transmitting energy to centers of distribution.



In working out a system of rules that should guide correct procedure in the designs of ornamental street lighting installations Mr. Stahl states that:

The justifiable expenditure for street lighting may be graded according to traffic density.

This scheme he develops in an extraordinarily interesting and logical way and we commend his article to all persons interested in the scientific and rational development of our cities.

## ARE WE TO HAVE 80-STORY BUILDINGS

While the New York Zoning Laws in their provisions for limiting the height of skyscrapers have given great satisfaction thus far, there is considerable doubt in the minds of those persons who are students of city problems as to whether many of the conditions which fast are making life unlivable in New York City are not largely to be attributed to the prevalence of such high buildings.

For, it is the building of excessive height which brings to a given street the vast numbers of people who are found in New York City's streets today, both on the sidewalk and in the roadway.

It is this undue concentration of population in a few limited spots which make the problems of the city so tremendous. Were the population to be distributed more broadly throughout different sections of the city, many of the serious traffic problems which exist today would give little or no concern to the city authorities.

Now a New York architect comes along with a proposal to build an 80-story building on the site of Madison Square Garden and has actually gone so far as to draw a plan showing what such a building would look like.

When one considers that the Woolworth Building is 58 stories high, one is inclined to say "God forbid anything higher"—notwithstanding the great beauty of that building. Our cities are not so designed as to make buildings of such excessive height either desirable or wise.

With the many examples of the new types of high buildings that have been built in recent years in New York under the Zoning Law, with its scheme of setbacks for increase in height, the

students of this question have an unusual opportunity of determining whether the present Zoning regulations are adequate to cope with this evil. Anyone who looks around him in New York City and views the new tall buildings that are going up must, we think, reach the conclusion that these regulations are not adequate and that the time has come when a further step should be taken in advance, and much more drastic requirements imposed restricting the height of future buildings.

## STATE CONTROL OF BUILDINGS IN OHIO

A recent extension of the activities of local bodies in the attempt to secure better buildings is found in the newly established Ohio State Board of Building Standards as part of the work of the State Department of Industrial Relations. The duties of this Board which has recently been organized under a law passed by the last legislature include the following:

- To formulate and report at the general assembly amendments to the present building code.

- To formulate and report to the general assembly legislation for the regulation of the construction of all buildings in the state of Ohio, except single and two-family dwellings and farm buildings, to the end that such buildings shall be safe and sanitary for their intended use and occupancy.

- To determine and establish equivalents for any fixture, device, material or method of construction required by the statutes.

- To establish uniform state-wide building construction regulations.

- To hold hearings and conduct investigations on or with respect to the foregoing duties.

The future work of this Board will be watched with very great interest.

## ZONING IN CHICAGO

The Chicago Real Estate Board, continuing its valuable services to the cause of Zoning, has recently issued the "Final Report of the Library, City Planning and Zoning Committee on Zoning in Chicago". This includes a brief history of zoning enabling legislation in the state of Illinois and a list of the zoning publications issued by the Board.

## IN INDIANA

Another state which has undertaken, though not officially, an active educational campaign in the cause of City Planning and Zoning is the state of Indiana. Thus the "whirlwind campaign" of the Indiana realtors of some years ago is now bearing fruit.

In a series of admirable bulletins quite similar to the bulletins of Pennsylvania which we have referred to elsewhere in this issue, Purdue University at Lafayette, through its Engineering Extension Service, has started a series of educational documents informing the citizens of the state and especially city officials and others interested, of the essentials of City Planning and Zoning. Some of these represent papers read at the Indiana State Conference on City Planning held at Purdue last spring.

In one of these bulletins a review is given of the status of the City Planning movement in the state by G. E. Lommel of the University. After reciting the laws under which City Planning Commissions are created, Prof. Lommel gives a quick review of the accomplishments thus far of City Planning Commissions in various cities of the state and includes in this review the following communities: Anderson, Batesville, Crawfordsville, Elkhart, Evansville, Gary, Indianapolis, Marion, Michigan City, Muncie, Richmond, South Bend and Terre Haute.

A second bulletin deals with City Planning and the Realtor and contains a series of admirable suggestions as to Land Subdivision Regulations suggested by Harland Bartholomew, City Planning Consultant of St. Louis. A further bulletin deals with the Housing Problem and Its Relation to City Planning and is written by Professor Leonard Smith of the University of Wisconsin, while a further bulletin discusses the City Topographic Survey in City Planning and its relation to the City Engineer.

All students of Zoning and City Planning will find this series of bulletins most helpful. Copies can be obtained by writing to the Engineering Extension Service, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.

## ZONING IN IOWA

Iowa has not been slow to take advantage of its new Zoning Enabling Act passed by the last session of the legislature and following closely the Standard Zoning Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce.

Among the cities in Iowa that have recently appointed Zoning Commissions may be mentioned Des Moines, Ankeny, Centerville and Ames. In all of these cities people are now at work actively formulating Zoning recommendations and studying the needs of their communities from the point of view of the best development of that community. Iowa is to be congratulated upon the speed with which it has taken advantage of the new powers granted to it by the legislature.

## A ZONING EXHIBIT IN CONNECTICUT

Middletown, Conn., has recently, in order to inform its citizens as to the need of City Planning and Zoning, held a City Planning and Zoning Exhibition under the auspices of the local Chamber of Commerce and some of the city officials.

Using a vacant store on the main street of the city a small exhibition was prepared and it is estimated that between 500 and 1,000 persons visited it while it was open.

The exhibit was evidently a comprehensive one, and as a result of it the Chamber of Commerce has urged the local authorities that a City Planning and Zoning Commission be appointed.

## OHIO CONFERS ON CITY PLANNING

An extremely valuable Conference on City Planning problems within the state of Ohio was recently held at Cincinnati under the auspices of the Ohio State Conference on City Planning.

Among the topics considered at this Conference were City Planning Legal Questions, Financing the City Plan, the Cincinnati City and Zone Plan, the St. Louis \$87,000,000 Bond Issue, City Planning Legislation, Metropolitan Planning, Platting Regulations, Planning of Small Villages, City Planning in Relation to Industry and Commerce and State and Metropolitan Park Systems.

Among the speakers on the programme were such well known City Planners and Zoning Consultants as Alfred Bettman of Cincinnati, T. Glenn Phillips of Detroit, Robert Whitten of Cleveland, George B. Ford of New York, Morris A. Black of Cleveland and numerous others.

In connection with the Conference an interesting exhibit of City Planning was shown.



## JOHNSTOWN STARTS ZONING

Acting under authority of the new Enabling Act for third class cities in Pennsylvania which became a law last April, the Johnstown City Planning Commission in June started a movement for the appointment of a Commission to proceed with the preparation of Zoning regulations in the city of Johnstown and a resolution to that effect was officially adopted by the Johnstown City Council on June 12th, last.

Recently the City Council has made an appropriation for the beginning of this work which will be supplemented by a larger amount in the 1924 budget. Thus Johnstown puts itself in line with other progressive cities in working out a Zoning plan.

## PITTSBURGH ADOPTS ZONING

After a stormy voyage the Pittsburgh Zoning ship has finally come to port due largely to the skillful piloting of its Captain, Morris Knowles, Chairman of the Pittsburgh City Planning Commission.

Notwithstanding the local opposition which developed and the long drawn out discussions which ensued therefrom, the Pittsburgh Zoning ordinance as finally amended was passed by the City Council on July 30th, last.

One of the points at issue in this ordinance was, as in other cities, the height limitation of skyscrapers. While the Real Estate Board urged that buildings should be allowed to be built to a height of 325 feet, the local authorities finally decided to make the limit 265 feet which would seem to be quite high enough.

## ZONING IN ASHTABULA

Ashtabula is another Ohio city to join the long list of cities that have enacted Zoning ordinances. The Ashtabula ordinance is one of the most recent to be adopted and is especially interesting in its brevity, clearness and conciseness, thus making it much more readily understandable by the average layman who has to use it than is often the case. In working out this ordinance the local Commission was very much aided by T. Glenn Phillips, who served as the Technical Consultant, a capacity in which Mr. Phillips is also serving at the present time in the cities of Spring-

wells, Escanaba, Highland Park and Ferndale in his own state of Michigan, in addition to his work as Secretary and Consultant to the Detroit City Planning Commission.

The Ashtabula ordinance is one which all students of Zoning will wish to obtain and study.

## TOLEDO ADOPTS ZONING

Toledo is another Ohio city which has recently adopted a Zoning ordinance, the new ordinance having become effective on October 10th, last. The Toledo ordinance follows the precedent of other Zoning ordinances and divides the city into 5 Use Districts and 6 Height and Area Districts. There are two classes of residential districts, one of these permits the building in future only of one-family and two-family dwellings and churches, schools and libraries. The other permits all other classes of dwellings, including multiple dwellings, apartment houses, flats, boarding and lodging houses, hotels, hospitals &c.

Harland Bartholomew, the well known Zoning Consultant served as Consultant to the Toledo Commission which prepared the ordinance in question.

A distinctive feature of this ordinance is that the Height and Area Districts are combined in one scheme instead of being separate districts as is often the case. The Board of Appeals also is called the Administrative Board which is a much better title than Board of Appeals. One of the important features of the new ordinance is the requirement for a certificate of occupancy upon the completion of a new building.

## A MANUAL ON ZONING\*

Man is by nature a maker of tools. With the fashioning of tools civilization begins; with their refinement, civilization advances. The tool is the index of the arts and sciences of the age, and an essential factor in their progress. City Planning affects the physical development of the community in all its branches, and thus touches most if not all phases of urban life. Not only the professional city planner and Zoner, the city ad-

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\* Manual of Information on City Planning and Zoning, by Theodora Kimball, Librarian School of Landscape Architecture, Harvard University, Honorary Librarian American City Planning Institute, Associate British Town Planning Institute; Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1923; pp. ix, 188; price \$3.50.

ministrator, the architect and builder, the real estate operator and builder, and the lawyer; but the citizen in his daily life are concerned in it.

To all of these Miss Kimball's Manual is an indispensable tool. Its purpose is to put the reader in contact with all the aids to his work in this broad field. These needs vary with the interests of the person seeking aid. The Manual succeeds admirably in satisfying these various needs within its brief compass by a careful and intelligent selection from the vast mass of material of the essential and the significant.

The Manual begins with a simple statement of the principles of city planning, followed by an explanation of planning procedure, a reference to cities which have adopted city and Zoning plans, and the names and addresses of organizations which will give further information.

Then comes a list of 10 books for the shelf of a City Planning Commission admirably fitted for the library of any student of the subject; a description of the work of the National Conference on City Planning; a similar description of the services in this field of the Division of Building and Housing of the Department of Commerce, at Washington; a list of the national and state organizations promoting city planning; the names of the American periodicals devoting space to planning and Zoning; an account of the work of "*L'Union Internationale des Villes*" (the International Union of Cities) which collects and disseminates city planning and other civic information throughout the world, and its American branch.

The Manual contains a reference to the records of City Planning Events and Progress from 1900 to the Present Time, which Miss Kimball has to such a large extent prepared; an account of planning in other countries, and how further information with regard to it can be obtained; suggestions for conducting publicity campaigns for city planning and Zoning; places where lantern slides and films on city planning can be obtained; 25 references for a city planning library; a short list of typical American city planning reports; the names of institutions of learning offering instruction in planning; a selected list of students theses on planning subjects; municipal appropriations for the work of City Planning Commissions and for Zoning; and last, a complete bibliography of the subject, in all its aspects, admirably arranged, and adequately indexed.

Throughout Miss Kimball has not merely given full information, but has constantly indicated the one, or the few most useful books on the various phases of the subject, the particular organization most likely to co-operate, the precise thing to be done for any given purpose. The result is a book equally useful to the beginner and the expert, the amateur and the professional.

Incidentally Miss Kimball's book furnishes clear proof of her fitness for the task of preparing it. Her useful work in the city planning field has made her known to city planners in all countries, and made them known to her, thus giving her the knowledge to write the comprehensive work that she has produced.

FRANK B. WILLIAMS  
New York













# Housing Betterment

FEBRUARY, 1924

A Journal of Housing Advance

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# Housing Betterment

105 EAST 22ND STREET, NEW YORK CITY

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## IN ENGLAND

Momentous things have happened in England since we last discussed the housing situation in that country.\* Since then there has been a general election. The Government has gone to the people and suffered a severe defeat. With the re-assembling of Parliament the Conservative Government has been turned out and a Socialist Government is now governing England, a new Cabinet having been formed with Ramsay MacDonald as its Premier.

Given a few weeks' breathing spell in which to formulate their new policies, Parliament has now reconvened and the new Government's policies have been announced. Housing is put forward prominently as one of the main issues with which the new Government intends to deal.

In outlining the new Government's policies at the reconvening of Parliament on February 12th, Premier Ramsay MacDonald indicated that the Government intended to deal with this problem resolutely and effectively. The new Government's policies can be summed up as the building of houses which the workingman can afford to pay rent for; as expressed by the Premier—houses that cost £500 to build and that are to be rented for 9 shillings a week including rates or taxes.

In other words, it is proposed to return to the average rental which prevailed throughout England for working-class dwellings in October 1919.

How this is to be accomplished with the present cost of building materials and building labor is not disclosed, but

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\* *Housing Betterment*, July, 1923.

undoubtedly will be disclosed later on as the new Government's policy is made evident.

In view of the great interest that this has for all students of housing, and as illustrative of Government housing in practice, we quote in full that portion of Premier MacDonald's speech at the opening of Parliament that has to do with the Government's housing policy.

## THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S HOUSING POLICY

Premier Ramsay MacDonald in addressing Parliament at its opening on February 12th, outlining the new Government's policies had the following to say on the subject of Housing:

The question arises, are we going to have some policy of tranquillity? No, we are not. We are going to pursue a fuller policy—a policy of confidence on the part of the whole nation, that will enable, for instance, all sections engaged in the building of houses to put their hearts and energies into the work—and aim at an ideal that the honorable members opposite might have been in office for half a century and never attain.

The confidence which is required to build houses is a confidence that the people who build the houses will inhabit them. It is a confidence required to enable men and women to work whole-heartedly; it is a confidence that can be secured only when the reward of their labors is just, is fair, is equitable. That confidence I hope the Labor Party will give.

\* \* \* \* \*

There are one or two very large questions which any Government coming in now must try to conceive in a large way. Small, pettifogging methods and policies and proposals will be found to yield nothing that is worth having. The first of these is housing. The view of the Labor Government quite generally is this:

On the great problem of housing, as far as housing means the providing of houses for wage earners, which shall be rented with some relation to their wage income, we have only just touched the fringe of the subject. Our party wants to get right into the heart of it.

I hope before long the Minister of Health will be here to present his detailed proposals. Do not let us shirk our responsibility. The housing problem can only be solved when decent human homes are provided for most of the working classes of the country, at rents which can be borne by the average income of those persons. In the production of these homes it will be necessary, somehow or other, to get the material and labor which are required. Provision for this has been made since the war by subsidies. We are going to continue that, and at present we shall continue it in relation to this problem of how we can build houses on the average for £500 and let them on the average for nine shillings, including rates.

That is the problem. I say the average price of the house is £500, and the average rent and rates nine shillings. From that we have to work out all sorts of possibilities; possibilities of construction, of finance, of funding, of arranging with local authorities and so on. Take what are called the Addison houses; not 10% of these houses are inhabited by the class of people whose needs must be solved if you are going to solve the housing problem.

Then, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer produced a scheme, but apparently that scheme is going to be fruitful, if fruitful at all, in the building of houses for sale. That does not solve the problem. It is essential that the class catered for in that way should be catered for, and so far as we are concerned we shall do nothing against it.

But that is the mere fringe of a big problem into the heart of which we are determined to dig our way in the hope of bringing up some scheme that will really face this tremendous problem of how to house the wage earners of the country.

The we come to the problem of labor. Today we have only got 50% of men in the building trade that we had there before the war. Why? Because private building has failed. Trade had become so disorganized, the demand so intermittent, the ups and downs so abnormal that no man or woman who had a choice thought of putting their child into the building trade.

## TO GUARANTEE WORK FOR YEARS

Take, also, the question of "dilution." The laying of bricks is a highly skilled trade, and to merely talk about "dilution" and say all you want to do is to take men in, is to talk nonsense.

What is the way to face this very difficult problem? First, we have to give the building trade a guarantee of continuous work over a certain number of years. There is no harm in it, and there is no difficulty about it, for the shortage of houses is so great that all that is required is to create a programme stretching over a number of years. That is the guarantee of time. And that guarantee would have to be given whether you had a shortage of labor or not. For only on a basis of a continuous programme of houses can you construct a rational financial system by which you have to solve the problem itself.

But that is not all. The workmen quite rightly say if they are to admit this inrush of men they must have a guarantee that that inrush will not be used to reduce their wages and still further disorganize the trade.

It is organization, foresight; it is the capacity that the State has for dealing, not with a few men and two or three interests, but the combined, inherent and unified interests of the whole community to produce what is required. That is our programme.

What is the result? Government after Government has tried to bring employer and employed together in order to come to an agreement, and failed. We are going to succeed. We have already called a conference, the spirit of which has been admirable, and I have the greatest confidence that the Minister of Health, when he addresses the House upon this proposal, will be able to say that complete agreement has been come to and that the question of labor and production has been successfully solved.

## THE DANGERS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSING

### ENGLAND'S EXAMPLE

There are some people in the United States who would like to see Housing made a political issue, in the belief that



by thus putting it in the limelight and making it the subject of consideration by the Government, greater progress would result than is to be seen now under the plan of relying upon private enterprise.

Irrespective of the economic conditions involved in this question of Government housing, or the soundness of its principles, all thoughtful students of government and of social questions must be given pause, to see Housing made the football of politics. For, that is what has happened in England and would undoubtedly happen in the United States if Housing were to be made a question of government policy.

In England almost as soon as one policy has been announced, another has taken its place. Change has followed change with kaleidoscopic rapidity. Dr. Addison's policy was discarded by Sir Alfred Mond, who succeeded him. Sir Alfred's policy in turn was superseded by Neville Chamberlain's, and now his is discarded by the new Minister of Health, John Wheatley.

In the short space of one year, England has had 5 different men at the head of the Ministry of Health; Sir Alfred Mond, Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, Neville Chamberlain, Sir William Joynson-Hicks and now John Wheatley. Is it any wonder that little has been accomplished in Housing?

Five years ago, under Lloyd George, Housing in England became one of the great issues of the Administration. It was announced with a flourish of trumpets that the Government would immediately set itself to build houses "fit for heroes to live in"; and the Government embarked upon a gigantic housing policy, involving the building of 500,000 houses, the chief burden of the cost of which was to be borne by the Central Government. After, however, building 176,000 houses, the Government found that the financial burdens that it was imposing upon the taxpayers of England by this means of subsidized houses were breaking the taxpayers' backs, and consequently that policy was abandoned.

That Government fell. A new Government came into power. It had a new housing policy and announced that Government-subsidy was all wrong in principle; that one could not interfere with the play of economic forces and that the new Government intended to abandon as rapidly as it could, without causing too great disturbance, the policy of the

previous Government of subsidies for Housing and encourage private enterprise to enter the field once more.

That Government was in office less than a year before it in turn fell. A new Government, that of the Socialists, has now taken office and once more the pendulum swings the other way. Housing is to be one of the chief issues of the new Government. It is announced that 200,000 houses a year are to be built; that employment in building houses to be subsidized by the Government shall be promised to Labor for a period stretching far into the future; the exact term is not stated but presumably for 30 years or even more, so that Labor may be sure of continuous employment if it decides to embark on the building of houses. The Socialist Government also announces that it will build houses to cost £500 and to be rented to the workingmen of England at a weekly rate of 9 shillings a week including rates, or taxes.

It apparently makes no difference what the houses are going to cost to build; what the cost of building materials will be; what the cost of Labor will be; what the output of Labor will be; the price of houses is to be fixed by governmental *fiat*, and so are the rents. Obviously, as in the last scheme of subsidized housing, the deficit will have to be made up out of the pockets of the taxpayers of Great Britain.

What the taxpayers will say to this remains to be seen. For the significant fact remains that the present Socialist Government does not represent a majority of the electors of Great Britain, but a minority. And, notwithstanding the loud flourish of trumpets with which its advent has been hailed by a certain group in the community, its present access to power is purely accidental, due to the peculiar method of constituting a Government that prevails in Great Britain.

At any moment, Asquith who heads another minority group in England, can turn the present Government out of office. So, while it is true that MacDonald is Premier, it is not true that Labor really governs; for, it holds its present power and office solely by the grace of another minority party who at any time by combining with the party that is greatly in the majority, the Conservatives, can turn out the present Socialist Government. And it, in its turn, can be similarly turned out after it has been in office for a few weeks.

The outlook for a solution of England's housing problems

under these conditions, with constantly changing policies in the Government is not promising and should give every student of the housing question pause.

In America the consequences of having Housing become a political issue are already manifest to the thoughtful observer in the attitude manifested by our state legislators toward the effort to control rents and afford protection to tenants from grasping landlords. Reason is set aside. Facts are disregarded. There is a wild scramble to secure votes on the part of the average legislator and to legislate every kind of wildcat scheme for the benefit of the tenant.

The way *not* to solve the housing problem in the United States is to make it a political issue.

## ENGLAND'S NEW MINISTER OF HEALTH

The new Socialist Government has appointed as Minister of Health John Wheatley a Labor man of the more radical group, from one of the Scottish Districts. A thoughtful observer of things political in England and one interested in Housing writes as follows with reference to this new appointment

Mr. Wheatley, the new Minister of Health for Great Britain, is one of the Clyde group. He is not so vocal as some of his colleagues and is certainly accepted by all parties as an able man, although untried as an administrator. The general opinion is that the Cabinet will appoint Committees for dealing with specified problems. These would report to the whole Cabinet. Such Committees would consist of the heads of departments directly or indirectly concerned along with other members of the Cabinet with special knowledge of the subject matter. The interesting point is that in this case such questions as housing and town planning would be discussed by the heads of such departments as Health, Trade, Transport, Labor, Treasury, etc. instead of being treated in a "water-tight" way.

Mr. Wheatley's constituents, and all those of the other Clyde members, are inclined to press for further restrictions on rent rather than decontrol, but as the main question is not likely to arise until 1925 it will depend much

upon what the general housing policy of the new Government will be. Mr. Wheatley took an important part in the debates on the 1923 Housing Act.

One thing is generally admitted that—as often happens in America under our system of democratic government—the new Minister of Health, a former coal miner, possesses no special training in the health field, and no special qualifications to administer the great post with which he is entrusted. The placing of untried men in responsible public office must give the people of England considerable concern.

## THE PRESENT SITUATION IN ENGLAND

The new Government, whatever its party, will certainly have to spent part of its first session in dealing with the chronic housing question, or perhaps it should be said, in dealing so thoroughly with the housing question that it will cease to be chronic. It would be unfair to say that the Housing Act, passed last year and designed to run until 1 October, 1925, has already failed. It was passed in June, when the season for starting new houses was practically over, but it would be absurd to claim that it shows any promise of solving the problem.

The housing shortage is more acute now than at any time since 1914. To some extent it is disguised by the fact that thousands who have hunted in vain for homes ever since the war have now fallen into a state of silent despair, and by the poverty consequent upon unemployment. But the last Rent Restriction Act, which was designed to keep things quiet for a little longer, and at the same time to allow landlords to get possession of their own houses for their own occupation, has demonstrated the thinness of this disguise. All over the country dispossession orders are maturing; in Bradford alone it is stated that 1,500 such orders were due to come into operation on 1 February, and though there may be particular local reasons for the Bradford figures being higher than those of most other towns, there is no doubt that the total of pending dispossessions throughout the country is very large.



## THE DISPOSSESSED

What is going to happen to the dispossessed? It has to be remembered that the essential difference between the last Rent Restriction Act and its predecessors is that a possession order may now be granted to a landlord without his having to prove the existence of alternative accommodation for the present tenant. The grievance of landlords who had bought houses for their own families, and yet were compelled to huddle themselves in furnished lodgings or overcrowded rented rooms, was very serious. It could not be remedied before, because alternative accommodation was not to be found. Its remedying now, before the general housing shortage is made good, only transfers the grievance to the shoulders of others who, if it comes to eviction, have nine-tenths of the law on their side, and would certainly have nine-tenths of public sympathy.

The plain fact is that no readjustments of the Rent Restriction Act help one jot or tittle towards solving the housing problem. The actual building of new houses is the only remedy. The argument that houses will never be built in the ordinary way by private enterprise until the Rent Restriction Acts are all repealed is sound enough as far as it goes. But it does not go far enough; it does not reach the present conditions. If, so long as rent restriction is maintained, private enterprise in the ordinary way cannot build houses, then clearly either private enterprise must invent some extraordinary way of building, or else building by something other than private enterprise must become the ordinary method of building houses.

## HOUSES ON PAPER.

Last year's Housing Act endeavoured to enable private enterprise to build in an extraordinary, i.e., subsidized, way. At the beginning of last month this Act had produced the fairly respectable total of 33,563 houses on paper. But on the ground its production was only 12,057. Of these 12,057, more than half were in schemes approved before the introduction of the Chamberlain Act; that is to say, in the days of

Sir Alfred Mond at the Ministry of Health, or in the very early days of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's reign. Even so, the number is that of all houses of which the foundations have been laid. Those actually roofed in were only 5,015 and those completed 2,247. Houses on paper may flatter the official mind, and houses which are just roofed in look well to the plasterer. But houses fully completed are the only ones which are much good to homeless families.

While these 2,247 houses were being completed, the housing requirements of the country increased by not less than 100,000. This figure is put down after making generous allowance for the number of houses which in the neighbourhood of London and other large cities have been built for sale. The number of these is considerable, but it is a dangerous delusion to think that the housing shortage can be met by building villas for sale. There are already signs that the house-purchase market is overstocked. The housing shortage, as it affects the vast majority of those who feel the pinch, can be met only by building houses which will be let at a rent.

If, as we all hope, trade revives in 1924, and the purchasing power of the community is thereby increased, a further impetus will be given to the demand for houses. Labor has already announced its intention to carry out a programme of 200,000 houses per annum for a period of years. The Liberal Party, if it forms a Government, will be found to have made a substantial contribution towards the problem by the work during the last three years carried out by the Liberal Party's Housing Committee in the House of Commons, and also by Mr. E. D. Simon's booklet, "Houses for All."

W. MCG. EAGAR  
Secretary, Garden Cities and Town  
Planning Association of England

## PROGRESS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSING SCHEMES IN ENGLAND

Shortly before the late Conservative Government surrendered office to the new Socialist Administration, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, the Minister of Health, stated in the House of Commons that during the 5 months in which the 1923 Housing Act had been in operation, he had approved plans

for the building of 85,036 houses. Of these, 31,000 were to be built by the Local Authorities, and 53,600 by private enterprise. He added that this showed that the Government had got private enterprise going.

That in the case of 44,000 houses, contracts had already been let and arrangements were being made to build these houses; that at that time, the latter part of January, there were 17,600 houses already being built under the Act, of which 3,500 had been completed.

He added that in the first year after the passing of the 1923 Act there would be 100,000 houses built under its provisions, and that this number would be greater than any number built in a single year during the last 20 years, with the exception of one year when 105,000 houses were built. He stated that the average yearly pre-war figure was 63,000 houses, so that they had more than got back to the pre-war figure. Moreover in addition to the 85,000 houses he had mentioned he was every week approving over 3,500 further houses. The Minister of Health stated that the best year under the Addison scheme produced only 88,900 houses.

He added that he could get more houses built if more building labor was available. On this point he stated that in 1901 there were 101,000 bricklayers; today there are only about 53,000. In 1901 there were 27,000 plasterers as compared with 13,000 now; 8,400 slaters (for roofs) as compared with 2,880 now. He added that there was practically no unemployment in the skilled section of the building trades today, and there was ample work in sight for the skilled worker and for at least a 25% dilution during the next 10 years.

### PROGRESS IN SCOTLAND

At the same time the Solicitor-General for Scotland stated that in Scotland the number of houses authorized to be built by Local Authorities under the Act of 1919, was 25,550. On December 31st, 1923, the last date at which figures as to progress were available, 21,087 of these houses had been completed. Financial assistance to builders had been granted by Local Authorities under the Act of 1920 with respect to 3326 houses, of which only 2324 houses had been completed within the period allowed for participation in the subsidy.

He added that under the 1923 Housing Act the Scottish Board of Health had approved schemes for the erection of houses by Local Authorities to the extent of 6,731 houses, and that of these, 225 houses were under construction but none had been completed. Private enterprise had not been especially active in Scotland. Under the 1923 Act certificates for assistance to private enterprise had been issued to only 557 houses of which 372 were under construction and 12 had been completed.

## INTERNATIONAL GARDEN CITY AND TOWN PLANNING CONFERENCE AT AMSTERDAM

Announcement is made that an International Conference on Garden Cities and Town Planning will be held at Amsterdam the latter part of June or early in July under the auspices of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation.

The programme is now being formulated; it is intended to have it deal with all of the main aspects of Regional Planning. Among these it is expected there will be a very important discussion of Parks, Park Systems and Recreation from the point of view of Town Planning. Henry V. Hubbard of Cambridge, Mass., is expected to read one of the main papers on this subject and the other is to be delivered by Mr. Hudig, a European Town Planner. Full details of the programme have not yet been developed. In connection with the Conference there will be a small and specially selected exhibition dealing with the subjects of the Conference.

This preliminary announcement is made now, however, so that persons in the United States who are interested in Housing and Town Planning and who are contemplating going abroad this summer may make their plans with reference to this particular Conference. The Conference will surely be held in Amsterdam, Holland, and will be held either in the latter part of June or in the early part of July. Full details will be announced in this journal as soon as received. Persons wishing for further details can obtain them by writing to H. Chapman, Secretary of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation, 3 Gray's Inn Place, London, W. C. 1, England.



## THE SITUATION IN FRANCE

The housing shortage in Paris still continues to be critical. Recent dispatches indicate that newly married couples find it difficult to discover an apartment to suit them even if they are prepared to pay good prices. Doctors and dentists are also among the sufferers, as landlords having the possibility of choosing their tenants bar those who are bound professionally to cause annoyance to the janitors by having visitors. As indicative of the difficulty of securing apartments an advertisement appeared recently in an evening paper showing to what extent a young doctor may be driven to find a place to carry on his practice:

Young doctor, unmarried, in position to marry, wants one or two rooms in a family apartment in the..... district. Would pay a high price.

That rents are still high is indicated by the recent action of the French Parliament in passing a bill limiting the power of landlords to increase rents more than 100% over the rents which prevailed in 1914. The Chamber of Deputies originally proposed to limit this amount to a 75% increase but upon the insistence of the other house, the Senate, the figure was fixed at 100%.

Notwithstanding the housing shortage Councillor Roéland, who is one of the leaders among French statesmen in the cause of better sanitation and better housing conditions, recently stated that 6% of the population of Paris are living in houses officially classed as insanitary.

He added that if the city's tuberculosis rate is to be materially reduced more than 4,000 buildings must be torn down. The city, it is announced, has decided to start work immediately on razing 93 tenements in which the rate exceeds one consumptive to every 10 inhabitants.

## THE HOUSING CRISIS IN BELGIUM

The public mind is much exercised over the shortage of houses in Belgium, the number of evictions growing from month to month as the result of recent changes in the law.

When asked recently whether there was a remedy, Senator Emile Vinck said he feared a very critical situation would result when the first evictions began under the new law.

The Government had been doing all that it could, he said, but it could not advance funds to meet more than a quarter of the demands made upon it. The estimated deficit of homes in Belgium would be 173,000 at the end of 1923. This deficit would inevitably be increased in 1924. Up to the end of 1923 only 23,000 dwellings had been constructed as the result of the work of the National Society for Low Rent Dwellings. Unless this figure can be increased for the coming years the deficit must go on accumulating. The war on slums has had to stop for lack of dwellings in which to house the evicted.

The only remedy is to build 50,000 to 60,000 dwellings a year, using all the economies possible under large scale construction. In addition a large loan is needed—at least a billion francs. The same means must be employed as were used to rebuild the war-devastated areas. Excessive architect's fees are a serious obstacle, which is now being made the subject of much discussion.

Even when all these economies are effected, it remains true that the new construction can be rented only to the higher-paid wage-earners.

## IN CZECHO SLOVAKIA

Since the War the housing question has been one of the most acute problems in Czechoslovakia, as elsewhere, due to the enormous increase in the price of building materials, the inflation of the currency and the rent control laws passed to protect tenants from being exploited by landlords.

In order to afford relief for this situation the State as early as 1919 passed laws providing for state-aid and making subsidies to the Ministry of Social Welfare for the construction of houses, chiefly multiple dwellings, to be occupied by men with families.

A Bureau of Housing was established in the Ministry of Social Welfare as the result of an appropriation made in the budget of 1919-1920. At that time neither the constitution nor the functions of the new agency had been definitely determined. At the outset it met with great difficulties. The housing problem had not yet come to be regarded as a social question and the public mind was ill-prepared to treat it as a proper subject for state

intervention. Recognizing that the mere regulation of relations between landlord and tenant, however important in itself, can be but a partial solution of the problem and that it hampers the development of private initiative in construction, the Bureau has sought to establish by way of regulation, a truce between owners and tenants, and to encourage construction by financial, legislative and administrative methods.

The Minister has made a number of investigations preliminary to the adoption of a policy of housing for the working classes, but conditions have prevented immediate action. All that could be done up to the present has been to exempt new buildings from taxes and from requisition; and no limit has been placed upon rentals nor upon the right of owners in the choice of tenants. As this rule is in force in all the provinces considerable sums of private capital have been invested in the construction of new dwelling houses.

In addition, power has been conferred on municipalities to construct artisans' dwellings. A subsidy of one million *dinars* (about \$200,000) was made in the Budget of 1920-1921 to municipalities to be loaned to Building and Loan Societies and Limited Dividend Companies for the construction of cheap dwellings. An additional million *dinars* was allotted to the Ministry to establish a fund for house building.

During the year 1921-22 subsidies amounting to six million *dinars* (about \$1,200,000) have been demanded from the Government, while the full amount necessary to be guaranteed has risen to ten million *dinars* (about \$2,000,000). Even greater credits must be advanced in future, as the State and the municipalities see themselves compelled to encourage the solution of the housing problem.

Furthermore the Housing Bureau is working on a project to establish a permanent building fund, and a department of tenement house inspection, which will conduce to the vacation of insanitary dwellings. Of course in view of the housing shortage immediate results along this line cannot be expected.

The Bureau has further organized an exhibition to familiarize the people with modern ideas of house construction and town planning. Several surveys have been made. One of these showed that in Belgrade the Government had commandeered 3,000 apartments for public offices and has now decided to erect public buildings in order to restore the requisitioned buildings to their former use.

Under the law of 1919 the State made a grant of Kc. 2,150,-368,167 for the construction of 20,985 houses containing 48,780 apartments, the greater part of which it is reported, have been completed. These houses consist largely of buildings constructed by Coöperative Societies and municipal authorities.

This work was considered emergency work and the law authorizing it was intended to be only for a few years to cope with the emergency as it then existed. This law lapsed at the end of 1923. Accordingly last December Parliament, before the law was allowed to lapse, presented a new law continuing the fundamental features of the earlier enactment.

There is no change in the basic principle involved in the two measures owing to the fact that the emergency still exists and the necessity for state-aid still continues, as private capital has not yet been able to function as it did prior to the war.

In view of the fact, however, that the price of building materials has come down somewhat recently, the index figure having dropped from 10 to 8, and in some directions still more, the state subsidy under the new law which becomes operative on April first, next, will cover from 45 to 55% of the cost of the building instead of 70% as it did under the old law.

In other words, the Government in Czechoslovakia, as in other countries, is seeking to gradually taper off the amount of the state subsidy and to allow private enterprise and economic forces to operate once more, just as soon as the readjustment can be made, with the idea that the entire subsidy will be withdrawn as soon as economic conditions permit it.

## RENT CONTROL IN GERMANY

Last June the Reichstag passed a rent control law to take effect on October first of that year and to remain in effect until July first, 1926. Under the terms of this new act all existing leases are continued in force—even though by the terms of the lease they should expire—until such time as the lessee himself has agreed to discontinue it and has given notice of such discontinuance to the lessor. Another feature is one which prevents the landlord from giving notice to quit to the tenants. If he wishes to terminate the lease he must bring legal proceedings in one of the lower courts for the annulment of the lease.



The conditions under which leases may be annulled are set forth in considerable detail in the statute. Among these may be cited the following:

If the tenant, or a member of his household, or person employed by him in his business, becomes a considerable nuisance to the landlord or to another tenant, or endangers the building through improper use, or sublets without permission, the lease may be annulled. In all such cases the landlord must first warn the tenant, and annulment of the lease is permitted only if the tenant does not heed the warning. A period of 6 months is set within which suit for annulment of the lease must be brought. If a year has elapsed since the date on which the acts committed are complained of, suit for annulment of the lease is no longer permitted.

Another reason justifying annulment of the lease is in the event of the tenant not paying his rent promptly. In such case the landlord may sue for annulment, only if the rent overdue amounts to twice the monthly rate; or, where the rent is paid every quarter, is a full quarter in arrears. Even where such suit is started the tenant is given the right to pay the overdue rent after suit has been instituted.

Where the landlord wishes to obtain possession of the property for his own personal use, even here it is necessary for him to present the entire matter to the court and for the whole question to be thrashed out by the court before he can obtain the use of his property. Even in such cases the court is empowered to require the landlord to pay the cost of moving to the tenant, who is compelled to move under these circumstances and to wait until the tenant can find suitable premises assigned to him by the Communal Housing Office before he can enter into possession of his own property.

The provisions of the new law regulating tenancy of company dwellings or those rented by employers to their employes contain many interesting features. One of the difficult questions involved in the renting of company dwellings is what is to happen to the employe when he leaves his employment. In most cases he generally has to give up his home, as

naturally his employer wants the house or apartment for his successor.

Under this new German law these conditions are very strictly regulated. If the employe has been discharged for real cause, or has left voluntarily without his employer giving him cause, the employer is given the right under the law to sue for the eviction of his former employe; and if the court sustains the employer, the tenant may be evicted, even though another suitable dwelling is not available for assignment to him. On the other hand, if the employer has no legal reason for discharging the employe, or has given his employe cause for resigning, the general provisions of the law intended to protect tenants in the use of the property is applicable to a company dwelling even if the tenant has left the employ of the owner.

If the employer, however, urgently needs the premises for another worker he is permitted under the law to bring a suit, provided he is willing to pay a suitable compensation to the employe thus evicted, the amount of this compensation being fixed by the court.

The law also provides specifically that an employe occupying a company dwelling may not be evicted for trade-union activities, and especially not for participation in a strike for better wages or working conditions. The law in question is applicable alike to all leases of dwellings, stores and storage rooms. It does not apply to new buildings that have become ready for occupancy after July first, 1918, nor to rooms newly created through the remodeling of old buildings, nor to buildings owned by public welfare building societies. Persons who did not reside in Germany on January first, 1914, may on expiration of their leases be evicted from dwellings leased by them, if the landlord has an essential interest in obtaining possession of the premises.

A novel feature of this law is the requirement that in deciding suits for annulment of leases the local courts must call in and associate with them a number of lay judges, of whom one-half must be landlords and the other half must be tenants—these to be chosen from lists made up by the local Landlords' and Tenants' Associations.

## FREE RENT SYSTEM TO BE ABANDONED

Recent dispatches from Berlin announce that the Free Rent System which has been in vogue for some time past is to be abandoned, the present plan being to restore practically the whole of the pre-war rate in gold for rents, thus greatly increasing the present rate of payment. It is announced that the Government will take 50% of the new gross rents as a tax which it is expected will ultimately yield to the Government 3,000,000,000 gold marks; the balance to be left to the landlord—50% of the gross rent—for administration, taxes and repairs and presumably interest on his money.

It is stated that owing to the ruinous state of repair which prevails among most houses, under the new system landlords will be no better off than under the old. For that reason prices of houses have not risen. The average price of a 5-story flat containing 60 or 70 rooms is said to be in gold value about \$5,000.

It is reported that the Government has refused to restore mortgages in the interest of mortgagees, but has proposed to tax away any profits made through repayment of gold mark mortgages and gold mark industrial bonds in paper marks. All of which would seem to indicate that Germany is not a very happy place for an owner of real property in these days.

## GRAFT IN ALLOTMENT OF DWELLINGS

An interesting indication of how Government control of housing works in Germany is found in a dispatch from Silesia to the effect that a member of the Clerical party of the Reichstag, and chairman of the local Housing Commission, was recently sentenced by the court to six months in jail for "active and passive bribery" in connection with the allotment of dwellings. The Deputy admitted at his trial that he had accepted presents of food, liquors and cigars from friends whom he had accommodated by allotting dwellings to.

Thus human nature is found to be the same in all countries and on both sides of the ocean. No intelligent American observer of things political would have expected any other outcome from a scheme to have Government allot dwelling accommodations to all the people.

## IN "FREE" RUSSIA

Recent dispatches indicate that living in free Russia under Soviet rule is not wholly a joy. In Moscow, a city built for less than 1,000,000 inhabitants, it is stated that there are living at the present time more than 2,000,000 people and only the very prosperous newly rich, or a few lucky foreigners who have fat expense accounts, have anything like spacious quarters.

While housing conditions are reported to be somewhat better than they were a year ago, because some buildings have been repaired, it is stated that for every free room there are hundreds of applicants ready to pay large fees merely for the privilege of moving in.

Generally speaking, the legal amount of space to which an individual is entitled equals that taken up in an American house by a small bathroom or a large clothes closet. In houses that have been returned to private owners or which have been exempted from the space regulations by agreement with individuals who undertake to repair them, it is sometimes possible to obtain several rooms. The premiums charged merely for obtaining rooms are reported to be sometimes fantastic. Cases are cited, for instance, of one man who was asked \$500 cash, plus \$75 monthly rental, for one small unfurnished room with no conveniences whatsoever.

Recently the Council of Commissars has been considering a decree forbidding the arrival in Moscow of citizens for permanent residence, except those who have been invited there by the proper organizations to take up permanent work, or who have been sent on special temporary duty. It is stated that this decree is designed to make permanent the cleaning up of the city started recently with the deportation of a number of persons classed as "undesirable elements".

### EXILE.

Under the terms of the new decree the authorities are given the right to expel for a period of three years those whom "closed courts" consider to be engaged in work not of a useful public character or who might be unable to indicate a proper



source of income, as well as those whose past or present history showed connection with the criminal world.

How these dictatorial powers of exile work in practice is strikingly shown by recent dispatches from Riga to the effect that increasing numbers of small traders are leaving Moscow where it is admitted even by the Soviet press that the "steel broom" the *Ogpu* (Political Police Department) is relentlessly freeing dwellings for the proletarians. It is stated that the victims have to leave without warning and must proceed with their families to definitely assigned destinations in the north, leaving most of their possessions behind, which are promptly confiscated by the *Ogpu* who are thus able to establish a "furniture fund", or store of furniture, which they distribute to workingmen of their political faith.

Persons who have recently been in Moscow and seen something of these banishments say the *Ogpu* often purposely allot husband and wife to different destinations which are changed only in return for a considerable payment to the public officials. The opportunities for graft under such a scheme are, of course, unlimited as are the opportunities for political oppression.

It will evidently be some time before Russia can be said to have returned to the ranks of civilized nations.

## IN SWEDEN

Recent reports from Gothenburg, Sweden, state that that city has voted 4,298,400 kronor (\$1,151,971 par) for the construction of new homes of which 1,000,000 kronor (\$268,000 par) represents loans to private builders of dwellings to be sold to purchasers. It is estimated that exclusive of this amount the remainder of the subsidy will provide for funds sufficient to build 453 apartments.

## TOKIO RISING FROM THE RUINS

Two months after the Japanese earthquake 100,000 houses had been rebuilt in Tokio according to Dr. Charles A. Beard, well known authority on municipal affairs, who has recently returned from Tokio. In his opinion it is one of the mysteries of the city where the material for these houses came from.

Dr. Beard, as a representative of the Bureau of Municipal Research, submitted 3 plans for the reconstruction of Tokio on a modern basis which were to be considered by the Japanese Parliament at a meeting scheduled for the latter part of December. Owing to the political situation in that country it is not expected that any definite decision will be reached on these proposals for some time.

Viscount Goto, chairman of the Reconstruction Board, at whose invitation Dr. Beard recently went to Japan to assist in presenting plans for the remaking of that city, is leading the fight for a city in the Orient along the lines of western civilization which will at the same time include the gardens and architecture of the old Tokio. A conservative faction wants to rebuild exactly according to the plans of the old city.

The plans submitted by Dr. Beard provide for parks and a subway and sewer system involving an expenditure of \$1,000,000,000. It is proposed that this scheme shall be financed by the national government paying one-third, the city of Tokio paying another third, and the property owners to be benefitted still another third. No building is to be permitted to exceed a height of 100 feet and no street is to be built less than 18 feet in width.

According to Dr. Beard traffic congestion in Tokio, because of its narrow streets, was before the earthquake worse than in New York. Dr. Beard states that the subway plan has met with approval from all political parties due to the fact that the railway and highway tunnels were not shattered by the earthquake. The new plan includes a main thoroughfare similar to Broadway, New York, where street cars and heavy traffic will run. Another great street would resemble Fifth Avenue. A canal to Yokohama is to be built large enough to accommodate big ships. Japanese engineers are urging that a fire break be provided for, so that in the future where there is a great conflagration it will be possible to confine it to one section of the city. Such a plan would necessitate the building of a boulevard on each side of the river.

It will be interesting to see whether Tokio takes advantage of these ideas that have been put before it and rebuilds along modern town planning lines according to sound principles, or whether like San Francisco it will in its haste to get back to normal conditions, simply restore the old city exactly as it was.

## GIRLS AS BUILDERS IN PALESTINE

Recent dispatches from Palestine indicate that the housing shortage over there is being met by the assistance of young women, many of them high school and college graduates, who have learned the building trades and are applying themselves to building houses and other accommodations for the largely increased numbers of emigrants to Palestine.

In 1920 when it became clear that drastic measures must be taken if the housing situation in Palestine was to be relieved, the *Keren Hayesod* took up the matter in earnest just as it had approached other vital problems in the homeland. The officers of the fund were met with a complicated situation. Much of the material needed for house construction had to be imported. Moreover, skilled labor, such as that of masons, plasterers and carpenters, was lacking. Worse yet, there were no building associations or banks from which loans for house building could be obtained. The only way a resident could own a house was to buy the land and pay the entire cost of construction at once. Following the appointment of Sir Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner, Jewish immigration began to flow into the homeland at the rate of 1,000 immigrants a month, and the country, already congested, suffered severely from lack of housing accommodations. It seemed that rents instead of coming down were bound to go still higher. It was in this emergency that the *Keren Hayesod* approached the Palestine Government and obtained authorization to establish a banking institution which would advance credits for house building. The General Mortgage Bank of Palestine, Ltd., was the result. Since its creation it has invested about \$300,000 in mortgages, and with this money as a basis the construction of homes immediately began, especially in the suburbs of Jerusalem, in Tel-Aviv, Jaffa, Haifa and Tiberias. Having overcome the money obstacle, the *Keren Hayesod* encouraged the formation of the Jewish Co-operative Labor Association, the chief purpose of which was to take contracts for public works without the interference of middlemen. After completing road building contracts for the Palestine Government, the association began training its members as house builders and within a year 1,000 men and some women had acquired skill

as masons, stone hewers, bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers and plumbers. Girls, some of them recently graduated from colleges and high schools, became competent plasterers and bricklayers and in fact artisans of all kinds, that they might aid in providing homes for the immigrants. As houses went up rents came down, with the result that so far as rentals are concerned one may live at a reasonable cost in the homeland.

## WHAT IS VENTILATION?

For years housing reformers have felt the need of a safer ground on which to base arguments with reference to the need of stringent laws governing the construction of dwellings from the point of view of ventilation.

They have known for a long time that what they learned in their childhood as to the dangers of C.O.<sub>2</sub> and, in later years, as to the necessity of a certain *amount* of cubic air space, were no longer considered controlling considerations in any scientific discussion of the subject.

With the new principles of ventilation enunciated by Prof. Leonard Hill of England and his school a few years ago, we learned that the fundamental factors in a well ventilated building or room consisted largely in free movement of air, avoidance of too high a temperature and avoidance of too much moisture.

But the housing world has needed for some time a more authoritative statement of principles than has been available until recently.

Now such an authoritative statement has come in the publication of the monumental work of the Report of the New York State Commission on Ventilation published in a volume of 633 pages, by E. P. Dutton & Co.

Through the generosity of a public spirited woman funds were provided for the careful scientific research work which has recently been concluded, an official Commission appointed by the Governor of New York State having drawn its financial resources from this private fund.

This Commission, composed of leading men in the scientific field representing all phases of the question involved, have carried on their studies with an expert staff for several years past and have devoted themselves primarily to a study of schoolroom ventilation. The conclusions reached as a result



of this highly accurate and scientific bit of research work have a much wider application than merely to the schoolroom, and apply to a very large extent to the ventilation of *all* buildings, for the principles disclosed by these studies are necessarily not in any way bound up with the question of public education.

Some of the questions which the Commission asked itself may be summarized as follows:

What is a desirable air condition in a schoolroom?

What temperature is best?

Should the air be moistened?

Is a positive circulation with large volumes of air necessary?

Where should air be admitted to the room?

Where removed?

Three types of rooms were observed:

One, a cold, window-ventilated room (with gravity exhaust) housing normal children.

Two, a cool, window-ventilated room (with gravity exhaust).

Three, the usual plenum fan-ventilated room as found in the New York City school.

In order to determine the effect of the method of ventilation upon the prevalence of respiratory disease found from a study of a few rooms, a more elaborate study was carried on involving about 5,000 children divided between two school terms; 58 different schools being represented in the first term and 76 in the second.

The difference in respiratory disease between the first and second types was found to be negligible despite a marked difference in temperature. As between the second and third types there was, however, to be found an appreciable difference, mathematically suggestive if not significant, although the temperature difference was but 2 degrees.

Colds and allied affections were most prevalent not in the really cold (59°) window-ventilated rooms, as one might expect, but in the warmer fan-ventilated rooms—and this in spite of the fact that the window-ventilated rooms were appreciably more congested than those in which the usual plenum fan-ventilated system was employed.

Summarizing its conclusions the Commission found as follows:

We find that on the whole, other things being equal, the window-ventilated room at 67° is somewhat more comfortable than the fan-ventilated at 69° F.

We find that the window-ventilated room at 67° is characterized by materially lower incidence of respiratory disease than the fan-ventilated room at 69° F.

So far as cost is concerned, we have made no detailed investigation. It seems reasonably certain, however, that the cost of extra radiation and window-boards in the window-ventilated room would be more than balanced by the ducts and fans required in the plenum method, and from the standpoint of operation the lesser aeration in the window-ventilated room must certainly imply a substantial diminution in coal consumption.

In general, therefore, we are forced to conclude that window ventilation with ample direct radiation, window deflectors and adequate gravity exhaust, seems the most generally promising method for the ventilation of the classroom where local conditions permit its use.

It is interesting and significant to find that this careful scientific study of the actual methods of ventilation in use in the schoolrooms of New York City, carried on through a period of years, with regard to the definite relation of the effect of ventilation upon the health of school children, indicates the desirability of what may be termed natural ventilation through open windows.

These conclusions should prove of great value to the housing reformer in his effort to secure adequate ventilation in the dwellings of the people of this country.

## THE GARDEN CITY NOT AN ENTHUSIAST'S DREAM

An excellent description of what the Garden City movement is, and what it is *not*, was published not long ago in an editorial in *Garden Cities and Town Planning* as follows:

The superstition that the Garden City is an enthusiast's dream takes an unconscionable time in dying. In the backwoods of social thought still survive many persons who have never visited a Garden City, but nevertheless "can easily imagine what it is like"; they picture a pinchbeck paradise inhabited by a peculiar people, part high-brow and part bumpkin, who tend sartorially to djibbahs and sandals, intellectually to all that is fantastic, and practically to fads. Very

slowly dawns on these sociological back-woodsmen the truth that Garden City dwellers are very much as other men, though more fortunate in—because more consciously the masters of—their environment, and that the Garden City is a break with the past because those who have learned most from the present are determined to plan and build for a better future.

Members of the Garden Cities and Town-Planning Association are called upon to be missionaries to all such as are still unenlightened. Housing is not enough: even town-planning is not enough, if by town-planning we are content to mean the planning of patches and rings on the outskirts of towns which have grown up without planning, and along the edges of rural districts which have still to realize their organic relationship with the towns. Until we become generally conscious that both housing and town-planning are but parts of a high policy of Regional Planning which will co-ordinate the technical requirements of agriculture, town-industry, transport and water supply, with the human needs of the laborer, the mechanic, the foreman and the director, there can be no considerable advance towards the solution of many of the social problems by which we are beset.

## SLUM CLEARANCE THROUGH TAX EXEMPTION

An interesting suggestion intended to facilitate and encourage the removal of the older type of tenements in New York's slum districts has been embodied in a bill introduced in the New York legislature at its last session by Senator S. A. Cotillo, who has made an enviable reputation for himself through the large number of measures he has introduced looking toward the improvement of social and economic conditions.

His measure is said to have the endorsement of representative real estate interests in New York City and while the bill as introduced is in no sense a final measure, having been introduced primarily for purposes of discussion, it presents an extremely interesting idea which may prove to be fruitful.

What the bill does in effect is to provide that new buildings erected in New York City and completed within the next 8 years, occupying a frontage of 100 feet, not covering over 65% of the depth of the lot, supplied with central heating and hot water and electric light and containing apartments of not less than 2 rooms

and bath, renting at a rent not exceeding \$10 a room per month for an apartment without elevator service, nor exceeding \$13 a month when elevator service is provided, if such buildings replace old-law tenements, that these new buildings shall then be exempt from local taxation for a period of 20 years, viz., until April 1, 1943.

In a preamble to the measure it is stated that:

In New York City alone there were on January 1, 1923, 73,851 old-law tenement houses, the great majority of which buildings are a standing and increasing menace to the public health, welfare and morals of the inhabitants, which buildings on the average are 50 years old, in a dilapidated state of repair, and are fire traps, endangering the lives of their occupants, and add to the increasing social unrest amongst the inhabitants of cities of the first class. As the constitution of the state prohibits the state and its municipalities from demolishing and replacing such buildings as has been done by foreign states and municipalities, the only remedy is the exemption from municipal taxation of new buildings that will replace the present old-law tenements.

## THE BATHTUB A MENACE

When bathtubs were first installed in the United States in the forties, the papers attacked them as extravagant and undemocratic and the doctors pronounced them as dangerous to health. As usual, government was called upon to restrict or suppress the novelty by special taxes and licenses. In 1843 Virginia put a tax of \$30 a year on bathtubs, and in 1845 a Boston municipal ordinance made such bathing unlawful except on medical advice.

## REDUCING LUMBER WASTE

In the best lumbering operations there is said to be a waste of from 60% to 70% on all trees cut. As a consequence, the 30% or 40% of the lumber used must bear all operating costs and produce all profits. Discoveries therefore by which valuable by-products of these operations could be found should have the effect of materially reducing the cost of producing lumber and therefore the cost of the chief item in the materials used in the building of the average dwelling house in America.



Recent scientific research carried on under the auspices of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association has resulted in the development of a process for carbonizing wood wastes and converting them into fuel briquettes. It is claimed that the thermal value of these briquettes is equal to that of anthracite coal. At a plant established for this purpose at Centralia, Washington, it is reported that it has been demonstrated that on the most conservative calculation the waste of a 200,000 foot daily-capacity mill will produce 60 tons of charcoal briquettes at a manufacturing cost of \$8 per ton. It is added that, if the by-products of 15 gallons of tar oil, 30,000 cubic feet of wood gas and 7 gallons of acetone alcohol to each ton of briquettes are recovered, as they may easily be, practically the entire cost of making the briquettes may be offset by these by-products.

In the Pacific Northwest, remote from high-grade coal supply which retails at as much as \$15 a ton, there is now a large market for briquettes equal to anthracite, so that it is believed that complete utilization of mill wastes will become feasible.

## CHOOSING THE SITE FOR YOUR HOME

Before choosing a house or a lot, you should decide how much you can afford to put into your home. When that has been settled—and it cannot be settled by offhand judgment, but requires painstaking estimating of one's budget for several years in advance—you can go ahead with choosing the site. Whether you buy a lot or a house, practically the same considerations will enter into your choice of location.

The question of how much to spend for the lot itself comes up at once. A great deal depends on whether the lot is "improved" or not. Where street paving, sidewalk, water, electric, gas, and sewerage improvements have *not* been made, you may be able to obtain a lot for less than 5% of the cost of the house, and you should probably not go above 10%. If improvements have been made, the cost of the lot may be considerably higher, but it should rarely run above 30%.

You must remember that if you do not expect to build for some time after buying a lot, you will lose interest on your money invested in the lot, and that you will be paying out taxes and possibly special assessments for street and other improvements, which must all be added as part of the cost of

the lot, even though its value may have increased by the time you build.

Where an unusually expensive house is placed on a cheap lot, it will probably be out of keeping with nearby houses, and will not command a good sales price. If too cheap a house is built on an expensive lot, it may be difficult to find a purchaser, and in such cases the cost of the house may add practically nothing to the sales value of the lot.

Choosing a site for a home is usually a matter of compromise, particularly in the case of large cities, where one must decide between a small lot in a more convenient and accessible location, or a larger lot farther away from the center. This problem is often closely bound up with that of a single house as compared with a double house, or a house in a row. Detached houses on large lots are preferable, but on narrow lots they frequently have middle rooms that depend for light and air on side yards 3 or 5 feet wide, and may not be so desirable as good row houses.

A site with a yard, especially where grass can be grown, is particularly desirable for families with children, and a space for a vegetable garden is also one of the advantages that may go with a good sized lot. Families with children should be near good schools and playgrounds. Many people do not care to live on streets upon which there is heavy traffic at night, and streets carrying through traffic are often dangerous, especially to children.

The general location of the home may depend largely on the part of the city in which the members of the family are most likely to be employed. It should be either within walking distance of the probable place of work, or in reach of good transportation. The mere promise that a trolley or bus line will be provided is not enough. Ability to reach shopping centers is important for the housewife.

While a family may think that it would like to live near relatives and friends, this factor should not be given too great consideration. Nevertheless, the general type of people living in the neighborhood is important, especially if you have children, and want to bring them up in the right kind of surroundings.

If a city is Zoned, it is almost always safest to buy in a residential district, where there is safety from intrusion by factories, garages and scattered stores.

If there is no Zoning law, how about private restrictions? Are there any restrictive clauses in the deed? In the deeds for all other houses in the block? If even one or two lots nearby are unrestricted, objectionable buildings might be erected on them. Is there a requirement to build a house of a certain minimum cost? Could you afford that much? Are the private restrictions such that a home will be protected? For what period do the restrictions run? It often happens that the private restrictions were made to run for say 25 years, and they may be about to expire, leaving the home unprotected.

In general, land that is well drained is best for residential purposes. The cost of foundations and cellar may vary greatly with the character of the soil. Sometimes closely underlying rock makes a lot more expensive to develop. The amount of grading that is necessary on a lot must be added in as part of its first cost.

There is no denying the fact that most people prefer a lot that is well set out with trees and shrubs, and that can be made neat and attractive. The set of the house with reference to prevailing winds and to the points of the compass may sometimes be a deciding factor.

Not only the size and shape of the lot, but its location in the block deserve attention. For instance, one side of a house may be made most unpleasant by the kitchen or garage of a corner house next door.

The value of a house and lot or a lot alone is determined largely by its desirability for a home. The general neighborhood, character of the site, and the public improvements available all have their influence. The intelligent man usually wants a better guide than the seller's appraisal or estimated value of the property. You should obtain a fair appraisal from someone you can trust. A good savings bank or building and loan association can probably give you just such advice. If they will ordinarily loan approximately 60% of the value of a piece of property, but will not loan you more than 40% of the price asked, it may be assumed that the price is too high. Or it may be best to obtain the advice of some dependable and reputable local real estate dealer, but not from some transient or fly-by-night promoter who sells out to "suckers" and moves on.

Above all, remember that you are choosing a place in which you will probably spend many years of your life, and that on the wisdom of your decision may depend the happiness of your children, and your success in bringing them up according to your ideals.

JOHN M. GRIES,  
Chief, Division of Building and Housing,  
U. S. Department of Commerce.

## BRAINS APPLIED TO BUILDING

Ernest Flagg, the New York architect who always has something original to contribute to any subject that he studies or discusses has for some years past been carrying out research work into methods of building construction that should prove of very great value to the country.

According to statements made by him the methods which he has employed will result in a saving of from 30 to 40% of the cost price of a modern house of anywhere from 5 to 20 rooms. These statements are based upon actual costing accounts made from buildings built of stone with all modern conveniences erected under Mr. Flagg's supervision for the sum of \$10,000 which if built by ordinary methods would cost \$15,000. The houses are not ready-cut or sectional or poured concrete or unit houses or factory produced, but are individual houses with walls of masonry a foot and a half thick or more.

In a recent interview Mr. Flagg stated that the purpose of this work was to improve the design and construction of small houses while at the same time reducing their cost.

One of the methods thus employed is using stone for walls in place of wood or brick. Another is doing away with what Mr. Flagg considers the unnecessary attic. As he says: "Why do houses have an attic? They are frightfully expensive storage space. Mr. Flagg's houses do not have any. Many of his living rooms run to the peak of the roof. If second floors are to be used, then bedrooms run to the peak—and they are as cool and comfortable in summer and as warm in winter as any bedrooms with vacant attics above them. As a means of accomplishing this desirability a small "ridge dormer" rides on the roof tree and keeps the room as cool



as an attic air space, or cooler. It is windowed and screened and operated with a cord from within. It also looks well on the outside."

By reason of this device Mr. Flagg claims that he is enabled to build one story houses with walls only 5 feet above the ground; 2-story houses with walls only 12 feet above the ground and makes possible the low lying house which every layman and architect dreams of and which has so great charm. Mr. Flagg estimates that at present prices of building modern frame buildings at 45c a cubic foot, a full sized attic in a medium sized house of 6 or 7 rooms will cost somewhere near \$1800.

Another method employed by Mr. Flagg to reduce cost is the elimination of the cellar. A cellar, according to him, usually costs about 20% of the total cost of the house. As he epigrammatically says: "It was first used to keep the house dry, but, scientifically speaking, it kept it damp. It was also used in the old days as an icebox, and as such is used no more." Mr. Flagg points out that unless thoroughly damp-proofed, all cellars are moist and that this wet air permeates the house just the way escaped coal gas in the basement does. By having furnace and coal bins above ground a great deal of effort is saved in housework, and the mass of the house is increased to make it more impressive. The space between the floor and the ground Mr. Flagg covers with water-proofed concrete. This is dead air space and houses so built are as warm and dry as houses with big, damp-proof cellars. The cost of the layer of concrete on the ground is insignificant.

Another device which Mr. Flagg in this case has invented and perfected is his extraordinary plaster partition by which a very thin partition is secured, thus saving valuable floor space in the building, also reducing costs. Mr. Flagg's partition is made entirely of plaster and is but  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches thick when finished. It is fire and vermin proof, less subject to damage than ordinary ones because the plaster is thicker, and quite as sound-proof. When one describes the method under which it is constructed one's credulity is apt to be tested, for the method consists of two men standing on opposite sides of lengths of jute, like burlap bags, and plastering directly on this hanging curtain, one man plastering against the man opposite. The method of the Flagg jute partition is described as follows:

Along a beam where the partition is to go are hung lengths of jute scrim like the material of burlap bags. The edges are basted together by twine with a bagging needle. At door openings and at walls, as well as at top and bottom, the scrim is attached with ordinary staples. Thus a curtain is formed. Now two plasterers, one on each side, go to work, facing each other, and put on the first rough coat each working against the other. If only one plasterer is available, a laborer can hold a board up for him to work against. The curtain of plaster now must hang plumb, like a pendulum. The bottom hangs in the baseboard. When the first coat is dry two more are put on in the regular way. And that is all there is to the Flagg partition, all lath and lumber and a great deal of labor being eliminated.

Mr. Flagg has used these partitions for several years in New York apartment houses that he has built. They have been tested by both the Fire Department and the Building Department and have successfully sustained both fire and water tests.

Another method which Mr. Flagg advocates and which he has proved in practice as a means of reducing costs is the use of dry walls. These are built of stone. A rubble wall is built which Mr. Flagg calls "mosaic rubble," because the stone is set in dry like mosaic work. The wall is built in a form with the flat side of the stone laid flush with the outer face of the form and concrete is shoveled in behind. No mortar is placed between the stones, but they are laid in dry and mortar is squeezed into the joints afterward when the forms are removed.

Other devices perfected by Mr. Flagg for saving costs are a circular stone stairway made of cement blocks which is said to take about one fourth of the space of the ordinary stairway and costs relatively little.

Another device is a fireplace recessed in the interior gable wall. The fireplace is not merely to serve as an ordinary fireplace but is so constructed that it will actually heat the room and is based on the idea of the Franklin stove. Other features of the Flagg house are permanent copper window screens which do not have to be removed, the doing away with leaders to catch rainwater and in place of them a small cement walk close to the foundation wall to catch the roof drippings. Other features which will have interest for not only the architect and builder but for home owners as well, are a special kind of roof.

Mr. Flagg has always been a pioneer and a radical and has disregarded the conventions and has thought out things for himself along original lines. Every one interested in reducing the

cost of building and in the better design of small houses will find it profitable to study with great care these interesting "new ideas" developed by Mr. Flagg.

## OPERATING MULTIPLE DWELLINGS

Interesting and valuable statistics with regard to the maintenance of apartment houses were presented at the recent Convention of the National Association of Building Owners and Managers, when Alfred C. Kennedy of Omaha presented statistics secured from over 80 apartment houses situated in 15 different American cities.

As a result of this inquiry some extremely interesting facts were developed on the unit basis. It was found that the operating expenses of these apartment houses averaged as follows:

Janitor Service—5¢ per rentable square foot  
Heating expense—7¢ per rentable square foot  
Elevator Expense—5¢ per rentable square foot  
Repairs—8¢ per rentable square foot  
Taxes—12¢ per rentable square foot.

On the question of taxation the following was found:

Average Tax Valuation—64% of owner's valuation  
Average Net Return—8.67% of owner's valuation  
Average Vacancies—2.85% of rentable space.

With reference to the return from the property it was disclosed that the average gross income was 98¢ per rentable square foot with an average net income of 52¢ per rentable square foot.

These averages, like all averages, must be considered in the light of the extremes. For each item reported on it was found that rather wide differences occurred in the different cities and in the different properties; thus, tax valuations varied from 25 to 100% of the owner's valuation; net returns were about  $2\frac{1}{4}\%$  to nearly  $13\frac{1}{2}\%$ ; vacancies from zero to 22%.

In the expense account items janitor service ranged from 2 to 14¢ per rentable square foot; heat, from 3 to 15¢; repairs, from 3 to 22¢, and taxes from 4 to 59¢.

The average rental per room was found to be about \$18.60 per month; the extreme rentals ranging from a minimum of \$7.23 to a maximum of over \$50 per room.

While the figures thus obtained came from too small a group to be conclusive, involving only 80 different buildings in 15 American cities, they do show a trend and mark a beginning in the kind of scientific study which intelligent realtors are now giving to their field.

## TAX EXEMPTION IN PENNSYLVANIA

It has been a matter of some surprise to students of housing to find that the example of New York City in exempting from taxation certain classes of new dwellings, with the view of stimulating the construction of such dwellings, has not been more generally followed throughout the United States.

Few other states or cities have adopted similar measures, possibly waiting to see how the New York scheme worked out in practice.

Recently the city of Bethlehem, Pa., has adopted such an ordinance for the purpose of encouraging the erection of new dwelling houses and meeting the housing shortage.

The ordinance exempts from taxation for a period of 5 years, viz., until October first, 1929, all new dwellings constructed after June 4th, 1923, and before October first, 1924, which must be finished and ready for occupancy before July 1st, 1925. Such exemption from taxation is limited to a total of \$7,000 for each dwelling.

It will be interesting to see how this scheme works out in Pennsylvania in view of its doubtful success in New York as a means of securing to the general public much needed dwelling house accommodation at reasonable rentals.

## THE SMALL HOUSE SERVICE BUREAU

Started two years ago distinctly as an experiment by public-spirited architects, the Architects' Small House Service Bureau has come to be an established part of the building industry and has demonstrated beyond question its great value to the home owning and home building element of the community. It has been described as a Home Builder's Clinic to serve and inform people who need professional help in planning and building small homes. In a little over two years' time the Small House Service Bureau has grown from an experimental bureau into a national organization with



offices in many cities and 6 regional bureaus already in operation. When complete there will be 13 regional divisions. Each will be located territorially in such a way that groups of architects can cooperate and serve their own territory with full understanding of the types and styles of small homes best suited to their particular locality.

The various Bureaus now have ready to use over 200 plans covering all types, styles and sizes of homes ranging from 3 to 6 rooms in size. These plans have been designed to use stock, standardized materials and equipment in so far as possible. This eliminates waste and reduces the "extras" to a minimum and provides the home builder a plan, which if followed to conclusion will insure honest construction and reasonable cost.

In an article by Maurice I. Flagg, the Director of Service for the Architects' Small House Service Bureau of the United States published in *Good Housekeeping* under the title "When You Build—Build Right," Mr. Flagg pithily says:

Many home builders who would never think of entrusting the removal of their appendix to the village butcher, entrust the design of their home to the village carpenter.

## HOUSE FINANCING AND INSURANCE

It has long been a source of surprise to students of housing that there has not been a greater development of the admirable plan of combining life insurance with the financing of home building, first seriously discussed in this country about 20 years ago.

Recently the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which has at the present time under insurance something like 21 million policies, has taken up this plan as a natural development of its efforts to promote home building upon sound lines.

In a recently issued attractive leaflet entitled *SAVED A HOME* the Metropolitan points out that if a man has a \$4,000 mortgage on his home and is paying off \$500 a year and also wanted to guarantee that home to his family in case he died, that he could secure this protection by buying a Metropolitan Mortgage Redemption Policy covering the mortgage debt. Addressing the average man, they put it as follows:

## WHAT IT WOULD MEAN IF YOU DIED

Into your wife's hands would come a Metropolitan check for the amount of the policy; enough, or more than enough, to pay off the mortgage.

There would be no foreclosure, no sale of the home, no moving into poorer quarters, no change of schools for the children, no leaving old friends and acquaintances.

## WHAT IT MEANS IF YOU LIVE

First and foremost, the supreme satisfaction that is with you over the years when your home is being paid for, that if death overtake you, the family has a home.

Secondly, when the debt is paid off there is left \$1,000 or more of a straight life insurance which continues on payment of the premium.

Thirdly, this policy has paid-up, loan and cash values, and participates in any dividends.

Then follows a tabular statement showing the cost of such insurance through a period of years assuming that \$500 of the principal is paid off each year.

All home builders should be vitally interested in this admirable plan for stimulating home ownership and at the same time protecting the home purchaser.

It is a most efficient adjunct to the financing of home building and we believe the future will see a very great development of this plan, not merely by the Metropolitan, but by all of the great insurance companies of the country.

## A FABLE FOR BUILDERS

Last Summer a Good Citizen of a certain town not over a hundred miles from Everywhere, built a Wooden House for a Woman and her Children. He built the Chimney of Brick because he had to. The Chimney was able to Stand Alone, so he did not have to prop it with Wood. But the Floors of the house would not Stay Up without props. The Good Citizen saved a dollar by using the Chimney as a support to the floors. He nestled the ends of the Floor Joists nicely in the brick of the Chimney. He covered up the job and got his money.

The Rains fell and the Winds blew in the most Biblical manner, and the Winter came after its fashion. The Chimney Settled a little; and there was a tiny Crack.

One morning the Woman woke up with Fire all about her. She tried to get to her children. If she got to them no one Ever Knew it. The Good Citizen who built the house was not Arrested for Manslaughter. He is building other houses of the same Kind for Other women and children.

He is making his Living by it.

FRANKLIN H. WENTWORTH, Secretary,  
National Fire Protection Association

## THE USE OF COLOR

In a recent issue we referred to the plea made by Mrs. Aldis of Chicago at the National Housing Conference a few years ago for the use to a greater degree of live glowing color in the homes of the poor and we reported recent developments in this direction in some of the new houses recently built in the city of Liverpool.

There is a considerable discussion now going on in England urging the greater use of color. One of the chief proponents of this is one of the Labor leaders of the House of Commons, and a member of the new Socialist Cabinet, the Right Hon. J. R. Clynes. He recently presented his views with regard to this proposal as follows:

When St. John saw the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, he saw it in color; the jeweller as well as the architect and the mason had been concerned in its building. Each of the gems which formed the foundations of its twelve walls represented a specific tint, from the reddish-brown of the sardius and green of the chrysolite to the yellow of the topaz and the deep azure of the amethyst.

Outside the limits of the glowing Orient, cities in whose decorative scheme color takes a definite place are rarely encountered. Two exceptions will jump to the traveller's mind—Venice, with the greens and blues and scarlets of her jalousies, and the pale pink of her *palazzi*; and Moscow, which has, I am told, a dazzling kaleidoscope of roofs in red and brown, blue and green, broken by sapphire and emerald and gold cupolas and gleaming white minarets—beauties, by the way, that I am not likely to be invited to view.

The English town of Tudor times must have presented a gay and vari-colored aspect. The weathered red tiles, timbered fronts, and painted escutcheons and shop signs gave to the narrow, cobbled thoroughfares a many-tinted background. It was only with the arrival of the industrial revolution and crude utilitarianism of the nineteenth century that the love of color was crushed out of the



British people and our large centres of population became the leaden-hued and depressing huddle of sombre buildings we know too well.

Hints of reaction against the grim domination of stone and stucco and dingy brick are happily beginning to appear. Here and there an oasis of ivory white, terra-cotta, or tinted vitreous brick breaks the monotonous line of smoke-begrimed buildings. In some of the newer erections decorative designs in colored wall-facings introduce livelier hues and suggest possibilities of varying and brightening the scenes of our daily toil.

As yet, however, little has been achieved in the direction of formulating definite color-schemes in town-planning or improvement. With the ingrained national distrust of the bolder use of color, British architects and builders are slow to realize the remarkable diversity in decorative possibilities which modern processes for the production of ceramics have placed in their hands.

A skilful gardener plans his herbaceous borders with the deliberate design of producing at different seasons certain pleasing combinations of color. Why should not the architect, who is called upon to prepare plans for the erection of large blocks of buildings or to lay out a new residential area, take a leaf out of the gardener's book, and set himself to combine with stately and harmonious proportions a color-scheme that will enhance the beauty of his work? One can imagine a combination of greys and yellows, browns and greens, blues and whites, or even gradations and shades of a single color, in the façades of a thoroughfare, that would perceptibly mitigate the dreariness and depression which we have mistakenly come to believe to be inseparable from the grey skies of our island home.

Scientists and medical experts more and more emphasize the curative and health-giving properties of sunlight. Unfortunately, in these northern latitudes an adequate supply of sunshine cannot be turned on at our will. But its absence may be in some degree counterbalanced by utilizing every opportunity to bring into play the next best thing—those colors which delight the eye and subconsciously infuse man's being with lightness of heart and gayety of spirit.

No inconsiderable part of the depression and listlessness which characterizes the life of the workers under the monotonous conditions of modern industrialism may be traced to the drabness and absence of light and shade in their environment.

If our streets and buildings presented to the citizen's eye the variety and beauty which spring from aesthetic employment of harmonious coloring, the whole tone of our industrial population would be beneficially affected. A light-hearted and cheery temper would be stimulated which would not merely lighten the burden of the daily task and eliminate a good deal of the friction, but insensibly educate eye and brain, and restore to our people some measure of that artistic perception of which they were robbed a hundred years ago by the crudities of the industrial revolution.

## COLOR IN GARDEN SUBURBS

Another member of Parliament, J. M. Hogge, is also a strong supporter of Mr. Clynes in this plea for the greater use of color. Writing with reference to this proposal in the *Architects' Journal* (London) recently he says:

In his latest peep into the future Mr. H. G. Wells gives us a fleeting glimpse of the homes of the Utopians. "Singly or in groups and clusters," he writes, "were buildings of purple and blue and white as light and delicate as the Alpine flowers about them."

As I pass through the Garden Suburb representing our present-day effort to materialize Utopia, I am struck by the curious timidity of the British architect to employ color in the external embellishment of his buildings.

In other directions his work shows a praiseworthy effort to rise above the dead level of convention. In most of the houses composing these Garden Cities grace and diversity characterize the plan. Each dwelling is given an individuality that charms the eye without destroying the general harmony by over-emphasis of line or form. But in the matter of color-contrasts monotony prevails where diversity should reign.

Color enters to a certain degree, of course, into the architect's plan. Pleasing contrasts are achieved by the combination of warm red brick or tiles with cream or grey rough-cast. Here and there a more adventurous builder has crowned his house with blue-green tiles. But why should the legitimate employment of color effects be limited to red and white? Other colors blend harmoniously with the background of Nature. Why should not Mr. Wells's intriguing vision of the "purple and blue and white" houses of three thousand years hence become a reality in the Garden City of to-day? There is no æsthetic canon which permits red and brown but proscribes blue and buff and green.

It may be objected that whilst, theoretically, no bar exists to the freer use of color in external architecture, in practice the architect is limited to the natural tint of brick, which is red. No such objection can be held in these days of advance in the production of terra cotta and glazed brick. You may have your choice in glazed brick of blue, green, buff, brown, and ivory tints, whilst in majolica an even larger color-diversity is possible. So far as material goes, Mr. Wells could dwell to-day in a home as daintily hued as any of those his hero espied in Utopia.

Why, then, do we not see in the Garden Suburbs that are springing up in England's green and pleasant land dwellings as brightly and variously tinted as a herbaceous flower border? It is not that human nature is opposed to the free use of color—quite the contrary. The only obstacle to a larger liberty in the adornment of our houses is the innate conservatism of architects and builders. With one or two notable exceptions they have not the courage to scrap their prejudices and boldly experiment in the possibilities of external color-schemes in domestic buildings.

The Garden City provides a peculiarly favorable ground for such experiments. In an area of this type each house is a separate entity, sufficiently removed from its neighbors to strike an individual note without overpowering its surroundings. The designer need not confine his scheme to a single color. Combinations of green and white, blue and gray, or green and blue would achieve eminently artistic effects. One can imagine a particularly pleasing impression produced by a matt ivory brick elevation adorned with

a string-course in majolica of olive green, peacock blue, or old rose.

As Dean Inge has reminded us, life in the Tudor times was more animated because of the presence of bright hues in the dress and dwellings of our ancestors.

It is not feasible to revive the architectural features of that period; but it is open to those who build the homes of the people to make freer use of the artistic coloring offered by the ceramic materials now widely and cheaply produced.

## THE PRINCIPLES THAT SHOULD GOVERN THE USE OF COLOR

Professor C. H. Reilly, the distinguished English architectural authority, in discussing this question, points out the principles which should govern the use of color in street architecture, its relation to the climate and color of the sky and the dangers that are inherent in it. He says:

The question is always being asked why cannot we have more color in our town buildings, and the makers of glazed tiles and terra-cotta are always replying that we can if only we would. The people, however, who seem most ready to accept definitely the invitation are the owners of kinemas and public-houses. Here, then, is a mystery; on the one hand a sincere desire for a brighter and richer architecture, and on the other the chief response from those whose business it is to satisfy only the very simplest desires and emotions.

The first question to answer is. What do we mean and hope for by the word "color"? Do we mean by it masses of elementary reds, greens, blues and yellows; or do we mean the rich and varied tones of broken color? If we mean the latter—and some would find in it more "color" than in the former—the broken surface of old brickwork, the pearly greys, the rich browns and yellows of stone provide it in abundance. But if by color we mean large solid surfaces of strong primary colors we ought at once to pay tribute to the efforts of the publicans, who, wittingly or otherwise, have in this matter been pioneers, unsung if not entirely unrewarded.

Before we proceed, however, to spread, as with a palette knife, stretches of primary colors on our street fronts, let



us look at the whole canvas before us. A good third of the surface in any street scene, and more at the intersections of streets, must be given up to sky. What is its tone? Three days out of four a dull grey, and on the fourth at most a pale blue.

Our masses of solid color have, then, to be seen against a low-toned background. That is the really important factor. It is in this that our street scene differs from one in Monte Carlo, ancient Athens, or Thebes. In the brightness of the Mediterranean sun a white building, even a stone or marble one, dazzles the eye so that its form cannot be read. Color is, therefore, necessary and agreeable, and, as everyone knows, it was used in classical times in all its primary strength. The famous frieze of low-relief carving of the Parthenon was not only colored but placed under the shadow of the deep peristyle behind a row of columns so that it might be read by light reflected from the ground. This was the only way in which its full value could be appreciated.

Hence, too, the enrichment of the underside of cornices rather than of their face.

When a Liverpool or Manchester sky throws down so little direct light, how much rises from a Liverpool or Manchester street? The problem, therefore, in our northern greyer latitude, of what is the happy tone of color for our buildings (apart altogether from the aggravation of dirt and smoke, as the country town witnesses) is altogether different. Masses of solid color, which under a bright sky look gay and happy, with us become heavy and crude. One has only to recall the dismal entrances to the Tube railway stations in London to see that solid colors, far from having a refreshing effect, have with us just the reverse.

It may be argued that the crudity would go, or at any rate be less, if the whole street were in bright primary hues. At present, among ordinary stone and brick buildings, the brightly glazed colored building is like an enamelled iron sign on an old wall. If the whole wall were enamelled however, there would still be the contrast with the surface of the street, unless that were enamelled too, and with the sky, which no form of sky-writing has yet been able to turn into Prussian blue and vermillion.

The quality of the color which the ancients used on their buildings when it was applied color and not that of the natural material, marble, brick, or stone, was not the quality we are invited to use to-day. As far as can be judged from fragments, the quality of the color on a Greek building was more like that of thin water-color than thick oil-color, whereas the glazed materials of to-day are far more treacly than oil paint. Look at the glazed portions of the Midland Hotel.

They have a solid glueyness, a thick uniform viscosity which is the very negation of life and color.

Natural materials, though they may very quickly become darker and duller in Manchester air, never become so dead as these artificial ones. The latter may indeed be washed—unwashed they hold the dirt in streaks and patches in a much less pleasant way than natural ones—but they cannot be brought back to life, for they have never really lived. They were cast in moulds from the start, and were repeated endlessly. In the baking, too, they twisted not a little, so that there is always an uneven puffiness of surface and line. They have not the clean-cut look of stone from the chisel, or even of brickwork truly laid. It is a case of cast material in place of wrought, and of a cast material which does not cast well. This, of course, only applies to glazed and unglazed terra-cotta when used structurally to take the place of brick or stone.

It is quite another thing when it is used decoratively, as the Della Robbias used it, inset in brick, stone, or plaster. Its very irregularities then increase its decorative value. These objections, too, would not, in my mind, apply with quite the same force to a purely surface material like tiles or mosaic. The difficulty of the bright coloring against the dull sky would, of course, be there, but from the multiplicity of joints and surfaces the color would be less solid, more broken, in fact. In Portugal there are houses faced with colored tiles which give a pleasant effect, but there again the latitude and atmosphere are different. We have yet to see a satisfactory external use of glazed materials in this country.

When it does come, about which I am very doubtful, it must for good neighborly reasons be applied to a whole street or district at once. Isolated patches like public-house

fronts and Tube railway stations do the same sort of violence to adjacent buildings in natural materials that an enamelled iron sign does to a country lane when set up in a field alongside.

## THE USE OF COLOR IN ANCIENT TIMES

Writing in the *Building News* (London) a correspondent discusses the use of color in ancient, medieval and modern times. What he has to say with reference to the use of color in houses we feel will be of interest to our readers and we give the following extracts from this interesting article:

Painting and decorating have too long been regarded as an inferior art, unworthy of careful consideration. Architects, until quite recently, looked upon all questions of decoration as far beneath their notice, and such things were left to the lurid taste of the builder or the worse than horrid taste of the local wall-paper store. Paint, if it was used for wall coverings at all, was always ugly and fiercely utilitarian. Chocolates, ugly browns, sage greens and drabs were considered "serviceable". Terribly up-to-date builders went in for a chilly porcelain white or a weary sea-green that made everyone in the room feel and look like itself.

Some fifteen or twenty years ago things were so hopeless that ladies of imagination and taste started mixing their own colors and designing their own color schemes. The result is that to-day there is probably no aspect of housing where so much science, care, good-taste and fine mediums are at the disposal of all. The hygienic and moral and physical effects of color are understood and valued, and our health, well-being and spirits have benefited exceedingly.

\*\*\*\* We, quite wrongly, assume that color was little used in the past. In Egypt it was everything. Hard, bright, primary colors were utilized in a fashion that would even now be by some considered daring. Temples, houses, tombs—all glowed with warmth and color.

In Phoenicia, Crete, Central Asia, China, Nineveh, Mesopotamia and India it was the same. In all those countries glazed bricks, for instance, were largely used. Temples and important buildings were white, relieved with dazzling colors.

Apart from glazes, bricks were often coated with other coloring matter for protective purpose. The Tower of Babel itself was coated with asphaltum, an excellent material, which in shade varied from purple, black and brown to an exquisite amber.

Greek temples and buildings blazed with color, and in the classics there are frequent references to the lavish use of gold. The palace of Ulysses in the *Odyssey* gleamed with it. We are completely misled by the present state of the remains of Greek buildings, just as we are by medieval ones. In the Middle Ages there was a riot of color dimmed only by the soft light of interiors illuminated with the most wonderful stained glass. Even now in Westminster Abbey and in cathedrals like St. Albans and Ely, vivid traces of bright colors remain.

There can be no doubt whatever but that from the earliest times down to the eighteenth century the houses of the people in every country were alive with color. Apart from brilliant wall decorations, such as we find in Pompeii, in ancient times hangings and cushions were for the most part dyed in the primary colors with vegetable dyes. In Tudor times rooms, especially those of the wealthy, would be unbelievably gay. Arras and tapestries, now old and faded, would then be bright and new; hangings, bed-curtains, cushions and so on, were rich and luminous. We see them after three hundred years of exposure to light and sun, and imagine they were always like that. Then think of the embroideries bejewelled with color. Woodwork would be new and bright and was very often picked out in greens and reds, purples and gold; chair upholsteries were new and vivid; leathers brightly dyed. Book bindings were often dazzlingly brilliant.

When we think nowadays of a typical eighteenth century interior, we see only faded colors and subdued tones. But was it really so? The houses were new and bright inside and out.\*\*\*\* The fashion now is all for clean pure colors.

\*\*\*\* The best modern practice is to aim at simplicity, effectiveness and economy. Expensive wall coverings that cannot be renewed for many years because of their cost are no longer desired. The value of variety and change is now fully appreciated. Above all, drabness, dinginess and ugliness are steadily being banished, and beauty need no longer be only



the privilege of the rich. The merest cottage decorated with taste and talent, can be at once an inspiration and a rest.

## IS THE BRICKLAYER DOOMED?

At a time when bricklayers in the United States are the kings of the building trade, earning from \$25 a day up, and with a limited output, it is interesting to get news of the perfecting of a mechanical bricklaying machine in England which is likely to revolutionize the building industry and to do away with the high-paid, skilled labor which has become so serious a factor in the high cost of building.

Once again the workman, who has sought to limit his output by artificial means and to control prices and wages by other than economic law, has to face the supplanting of his efforts by a mechanical device. Such has been the history of industry since the world began, so it is not surprising to learn that the ingenuity of man has set to work to perfect a machine which would do away with the necessity of employing a bricklayer who has deliberately limited his output to 200 bricks per day, as has happened in England for some time past.

Word has recently been received of a mechanical bricklaying machine manufactured by Messrs. Sir William Arrol & Co., Ltd., of Glasgow. It is said that the machine has been put into actual use only after 5 years spent in experimentation by the inventor. The name of this machine is the "K Erector" and it is said to build brick walls rapidly and cheaply. Those wishing a technical description of the method by which it operates will find this fully set forth in the magazine *The National Builder* (London), in which the machine is not only described but is illustrated photographically showing it in actual operation building the walls of a small house in England. It would seem from the description that the machine is a practical one and that it has been so perfected as to really serve the purpose for which it is intended. It is stated that the speed with which the machine lays brick is necessarily regulated by the speed of feeding the supply of bricks into the hopper but the average is from 1200 to 1500 bricks per hour, or about 10,000 per working day. Three men are required to feed and work the machine, and the motive power is supplied by a 3 h.p. motor, or where current is not available, by a gas engine.

Those interested—and the matter will no doubt be one of very considerable interest in view of the figures just given—may see the machine in operation on a large housing scheme in Glasgow, where its adaptability under working conditions is being tested.

Should this machine prove to be efficacious, then the threatened famine in bricks is likely to become very generally felt, and a considerable fortune is lying in wait for anyone who can introduce a new process of brickmaking—one by which bricks may be turned out at greater speed and at less cost.

## ROOM REGISTRIES

The spread of the Room Registry service which developed rather extensively in war-times when workers crowded in in vast numbers in communities that had no place in which to accommodate them, is well illustrated by a small leaflet recently issued by the Room Registries Round Table of Boston. Here in the compass of 4 pages is given a list of the coöperative Room Registry organizations in Boston embracing some 5 central organizations followed by a list of the leading New England towns and cities which offer a room registry service embracing some 22 different communities distributed in Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

In setting forth the advantages of a Room Registry Service this little leaflet has the following to say:

When you go to a strange city why spend hours in wearying and unsuccessful search for a room, when the Room Registry is there to help you?

The Room Registry gives the stranger definite expert information concerning the best opportunities for living in carefully investigated houses.

The standards established by the Boston Coöperative Registries include the following:

- A Trained Registrar in charge.
- Careful consideration of the needs of each applicant.
- Selection of rooms in well kept houses which can be vouched for as reliable.
- Inspection at least once a year.
- Constructive Cooperation with Landladies.

Persons desiring copies of this little leaflet may obtain them from the South End House Room Registry, 171 West Brookline Street, Boston.

The Room Registry Service developed in New England is one that serves a most useful function and is a movement that should be developed throughout the entire United States. There is very great need for similar service in other parts of the country.

## STIMULATING PRIDE IN HOMES

Experienced housing managers have advocated for many years the desirability of stimulating pride in the upkeep of their homes among working people, by the offering of prizes in an annual competition for the best kept homes. A recent convert to this idea is the Modern Housing Corporation at Flint, Mich., where the residents occupying houses in Civic and Chrevolet Parks were awarded prizes amounting to \$500, offered for permanent improvements such as the planting and building up of hedges, trees, shrubbery and other things tending to promote better appearance of the homes. A prize of \$50 was awarded for the winner of this general competition.

A first prize for a similar amount was also awarded for seasonal improvements in the planting of flowers and gardens. In making these awards the items covered in the judging were based on the conditions of shrubbery, condition of the buildings, garage, if any, the drives—their appearance and care—and the general tidiness and neatness of the premises.

Planting counted for 40% in the contest and was graded according to the arrangement of planting, the amount, whether overplanted or underplanted, the condition of cultivation, pruning, the general balance and effect of the planting, whether graded properly or not and for a combination of shrubs, with annuals for borders. Condition of the lawn counted for 30% and was based on the number of weeds, smoothness, condition of parking strip between sidewalk and curbing, the edging around footwalks and for smoothness of trim.

Driveways to garages figured for 15% in the judging and good concrete drives were scored as perfect, although the ribbon drives were considered best. Cinder or gravel drives when raked up to provide a crown in the center were taken into consideration. Ruts in the driveway scored heavily against the contestants.

Paint, whether old and scaling or too thin and weak and the general color scheme counted for 15% with the judges.

In working out this basis of scoring it was done so as to give every dweller in the two parks an equal chance, whether their homes were the large and beautiful or the more inexpensive and humble. Neatness of house and lawn planting constituted the major points and the judges stated that they found better maintenance predominated among the dwellers in the smaller homes. A tendency toward overplanting marked the contest and the judges warned against this practice, also against underplanting. An evenly balanced planting of shrubs and lawns was the perfect score they were looking for. The planting of dwarf and weeping trees was discouraged as they are freaks of nature. In the entire district was shown the need for planting more domestic shade trees.

Altogether this competition has proved to be of value in the purpose for which it was created, namely, the stimulating of better taste and pride in the upkeep of homes by the people of a given community.

## ARE THERE "CANCER" HOUSES?

We are indebted to the always interesting *Mouvement Communal* for an account of a statistical study made by M. Paul Juillerat of the Sanitary Research Bureau of Paris, which is suggestive of a possible means of establishing a relationship between housing and cancer. Statistics available for 8 years as to the number of deaths by cancer and their distribution among the houses of Paris, show the following facts:

In 14,784	houses,	there	had	been	1	death
3,175	"	"	"	"	2	deaths
708	"	"	"	"	3	"
181	"	"	"	"	4	"
48	"	"	"	"	5	"
13	"	"	"	"	6	"
2	"	"	"	"	7	"
1	house	"	"	"	8	"
1	"	"	"	"	9	"

The point of interest for M. Juillerat in these figures is that they seem to him to offer a means of determining whether or not one death by cancer in a house indicates an increased probability of further deaths by cancer in the same house;



in other words, whether there is a relation between the house and the disease, other than that due to chance.

M. Juillerat undertakes to compare the theoretic distribution with that actually found during the period in question. There were in all 24,957 deaths, and the number of houses in Paris was 80,629. According to him, the theory of probabilities shows that the mathematical chance of any one house being the scene of 1 of the 24,957 deaths was about 1 in  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; its chance of having 2 such deaths was about 1 in 28; while only 1 house in 276 would be likely to be visited three times, if only chance were at work.

But, he states, the observed facts as compared with the laws of chance, show fewer houses to have escaped with one death than might have been expected, and more to have had 2 or 3 deaths than chance distribution alone could account for. As to the houses having 4 or more deaths, these are so numerous as make it seem quite probable that some factor other than chance was responsible for their occurrence in those particular habitations. The following table shows this clearly:

No. of Deaths per House		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
House (Actual).....		61726	14784	3175	708	181	48	31	2	1	1
Houses (Laws of Chance) .....		59175	18314	2834	292	23	1	0	0	0	0

In concluding, M. Juillerat says:

Thus there were 48 houses having had 5 deaths, where we might have expected 1 or 2; and no house ought to have been struck more than 5 times, but the figures show 17 houses were so struck, one having no less than 9 deaths. Here, then, is a confirmation of the belief as to the contagiousness of cancer.

## HOUSING IN ANCIENT ROME \*

In the Roman world there were two types of house, the "*domus*" and the "*insula*." Hitherto the *domus* as exemplified at Pompeii has been regarded as the typical Roman house. We know, however, that at Rome there were great blocks of flats or tenements to which the term "*insulae*" was applied. Crowded

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\* From the Town Planning Review.

conditions favored the development of this type. They were often raised to an excessive height compared with the width of the streets, and ancient authors complain of this as early as the last century of the Republic. Under Augustus and Trajan the height limit was fixed at 70 and 60 feet respectively, and under Nero at twice the width of the street. By the fourth century according to statistics the "*insulae*" outnumbered the "*domus*" by 21 to 1. It is obvious that the "*insula*" was the type prevailing at Rome and that the "*domus*" at any rate after the first century B. C. was the home only of the richer citizens. Each "*insula*" had an "*insularius*" in charge, who, though a slave, was in a superior position and collected the rents for the landlord.

The excavations at Ostia have at last revealed to us what was the design of these blocks. Planned on three or four floors with strict regard to economy of space, they depended for light on the exterior. This is in contrast to the "*domus*" which was built around the central *atrium*. Independent apartments were provided with direct access by separate staircases to the street. Sometimes a large courtyard, reached from the street by passages, furnished additional light in the rear. Many windows in long horizontal lines corresponded to the more or less equal division of rooms. Projecting balconies and narrow streets protected the interior from the hot sun. These balconies together with porticos and loggias at different levels were features of the external design. In fact, these blocks are very much like a modern block of flats.

This is the prevailing type of house at Ostia which is a typical Roman town of the first and second centuries A. D., and almost a suburb of Rome itself. It is natural to suppose that the *insulae* at Rome would present the same features. The Roman houses were, however, rarely built, at any rate during the early period, of as good material as those at Ostia, where brick-faced concrete and travertine with cut brick for mouldings is used with considerable skill. At Rome after the fire in 64 A. D., Nero ordered private persons to rebuild their property with at least the lower story of stone. This was an improvement on former building regulations, but even after this time the upper part was very often of wood and flimsy materials. Hence the frequent reference, in Roman writings, to the "miserable attic" and to the danger of fire. Juvenal in his famous third Satire, describes the landlord's agent patching up a gaping crack and telling the ten-

ants to sleep soundly when the house is on the verge of collapse. He goes on to picture the fate of the poor man who is already burnt to death in his attic under the eaves by the time that the alarm is raised at the foot of the stairs. He also says that you could buy a pleasant home in the country with a garden for what you would have to pay in rent for one of these "black holes."

In contrast with the plan of many provincial towns, the plan of Rome itself was extraordinarily irregular. The principal streets followed the natural features of the land. Livy gives as a reason for their erratic lines and also for the fact that drains ran under the houses, that after the fire caused by the Gaul invasion 390 B. C., people were given materials and encouraged by prizes to rebuild their own houses. At any rate the streets were very narrow and congestion was such that by the first century A. D. carts were not allowed in the streets except at night when the noise on the paved roadway made sleep impossible, except for the rich man in his *domus*. Later, wheeled traffic was forbidden to pass through the Forum altogether. Shops projected well into the streets and from the balconies it was possible to shake hands with the people opposite.

The "*caupona*" lately excavated in the *Via della Casa di Diana* at Ostia is probably representative of the cookshop or cheap restaurant of the early second century A. D. It consists of a main room with a counter on the street and the entrance at the side. This counter has two sides and on the third are shelves for bottles, glasses, etc.; underneath is a sink or trough. The shop is decorated in color and paintings of various eatables form part of the design. Many of the shops must, however, have been more or less temporary constructions in front of store-rooms. In Rome the meat trade was carried on in the *Forum Boarium*, that in fruit and vegetables in the *Forum Holitorium*, and distributions of corn were made in the *Porticus Minucia*. Most of the book shops were apparently in the *Subura* and the names of newly published works were written up on the door posts. Besides the regular traders, the streets were thronged with hawkers, fortune-tellers and beggars of all sorts.

Walking in the narrow crowded streets was a disagreeable and dangerous necessity for a man who was not rich enough to afford to be carried in a litter. He ran the risk of being struck in the side by planks of timber, of being trodden on by soldiers'

hob-nailed boots, of being crushed to death under a wagon load of stone. At night a poor man in the streets was exposed to all sorts of dangers. There were the chances of being struck on the head by things thrown out of high windows and there was a possibility of being assailed by thieves or bidden to stand by quarrelsome bullies or one of those bands of profligate young men which were brought into fashion by the example of Nero.

H. CHALTON BRADSHAW.

## SOMETHING NEW IN HOUSING QUESTIONNAIRES

The Committee on Housing of the American Association of University Women is sending out to the 244 local branches of that organization a brief but searching housing questionnaire framed along somewhat novel lines.

Its first and obvious purpose is to collect information as to housing conditions in all parts of the United States and in all sorts and sizes of communities. Its next and equally important aid is to provoke thought among those who fill it out. It involves a sort of know-your-own-town exercise in the housing field, and then a measuring up by the best outside standards.

The local people are asked first whether they have a city plan? a regional plan? a Zoning ordinance? a state housing law? a local one? How their requirements as to light, air, sanitation, etc., compare with those of the Model Housing Law and also with those of the State of Iowa, it being left to the researchers to discover the approximate identity of the two. Then they are to compare their local death rate and infant mortality rate with those of the American registration area and of the English model-housing towns, Letchworth, Port Sunlight and Bournville, and finally with those of that best-housed and healthiest country in the world—New Zealand.

All this has to do with preventing the bad house. Next they are to consider securing the good house. Have they a housing shortage? What is being done to overcome it? Have they any non-commercial, limited-dividend housing companies? How many dwellings have they built? What is their capitalization? What dividends do they pay? Why can't they be expanded indefinitely? Would it help if these companies could borrow money



from the government at cost? Would municipal housing help?

Then there is a bit of human interest injected into an otherwise impersonal investigation. The investigator is asked to imagine herself the wife of a steady, industrious American-born unskilled laborer with several small children looking for a home. What sort of a home (number of rooms, improvements, state of repair) would she find in her community at a rent not to exceed 20% of her husband's income? The experiment is repeated for a foreign-born, non-English-speaking family, and for a colored family.

Following, is a section dealing with home-ownership. What is the local percentage of home-owning families? How does it compare with the average for the United States? with the best? What is being done to encourage home-ownership among people of small means? Do the Building and Loan Associations have more requests for loans than they can grant? To what extent? Can second mortgages be secured by workingmen? Where and at what interest rate?

The Housing Division of the Department of Commerce is quoted in its calculation that a family with a \$2,000 income may, under favorable circumstances, venture on the purchase of a \$4,000 house, if they have \$1,000 saved up, and can get the rest from a Building and Loan Association at 6%. Its estimate is also quoted that the annual charges on such a house, while the loan was being paid off, would be about \$550. The question is thereupon asked: Supposing housing loans were made from Postal Savings deposits, only to those with incomes of less than \$2,000, at the interest which the Government pays its Postal Savings depositors (2%), for a maximum period of 25 years, and a maximum amount of 90% of total cost of development,—how many families would that add to your potential home-owners?

It is believed that if every community in the United States would ask itself these or similar questions, a long step would have been taken toward the development of clear thinking in the field of housing—a necessary prerequisite to any substantial progress.

EDITH ELMER WOOD  
Chairman, A. A. U. W. Committee on Housing

## BETTER HOMES

The "Better Homes in America Movement" which was initiated in 1922 by Mrs. William Brown Meloney of the *Delineator*, has now been reorganized with National headquarters at 1653 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington. Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, is president of the organization; and James Ford, on leave of absence from Harvard University, is its executive director. John M. Gries, of the Division of Building and Housing, Department of Commerce, is treasurer. The other directors are: Grace Abbott, Chief U. S. Children's Bureau; Donn Barber, Fellow, American Institute of Architects; Edwin H. Brown, President, Architects' Small House Service Bureau; Christian A. Herter; Mrs. William Brown Meloney; Mrs. John Sherman, Chairman Department of Applied Education, General Federation of Women's Clubs; and George Wilder. A representative Advisory Council has also been appointed.

One of the purposes of the movement is to induce the cities, towns and villages of America each year to conduct demonstrations of better homes. A local Homes Demonstration Committee builds a house, or buys or borrows one for the purpose and through subcommittees conducts demonstrations of improved planting and gardening, of kitchen equipment, labor saving devices, plumbing and heating, economical and tasteful furnishings and such other details as the home nursery, home library and home play. The house is open to the community during Demonstration Week, which this year will be from May 11 to May 18. A record is kept of the attendance, hostesses are in charge and an attempt is made to make the demonstration as educational as possible. Furniture, furnishings and equipment are ordinarily borrowed from local retailers, but prices are not indicated and the name of the vendor is nowhere published on furnishings. Attempt is made to keep the movement absolutely free from commercialism and to make the demonstration a source of general public training in standards of house- and site-planning and of household equipment, house furnishings and household management.

The methods to be followed include: (1) An Educational Campaign explaining the movement conducted with the assistance of the newspapers, stores, factories, churches, schools and clubs. (2) A Demonstration Home or Model Home to be selected, completely furnished and equipped for inspection by the public during Better Homes Week, May 11 to 18. An interesting programme of lectures, cooking demonstrations, and other exhibits of interest to the home-maker to be arranged. (3) Local committees to carry on the following activities: Providing for its Budget, Selecting the Demonstration Home, Providing for Furnishing and Decoration, Reception of Visitors and Management, Home Economic Demonstrations and Model Kitchen Contests, and Campaigns to Stimulate Thrift for Home Ownership.

In 1923 there were approximately 1000 demonstrations of Better Homes held in cities, towns, and villages of America in cooperation with this organization. It is estimated that fully two million people attended these demonstrations. Communities in every state in the Union participated. An educational campaign was also conducted through newspapers and magazines. Lectures were given in most of the communities in which there were demonstrations. Churches, schools, and clubs also participated very generously. Ordinarily the committee in charge of the demonstration was made up of representatives of the leading civic associations of the community, the chairman representing a leading women's club, the secretary often selected by the local Chamber of Commerce, and the subcommittees manned by citizens representing a wide variety of interests. Architects, merchants, realtors, builders, interior decorators, and dealers in each of the articles necessary for the construction or equipment of houses have cooperated with an excellent and most praiseworthy demonstration of disinterested civic spirit. Local committees have been enthusiastic over the results of the demonstrations and are almost unanimous in their decision to serve again.

Better Homes in America, as its name would imply, is interested not only in housing, but in all of the problems of the home. The home demonstrations, therefore, have been utilized as a means of extending training in domestic science and care of children as well as in site-planning, housing and furnishing. A 16 page "Guidebook for Demonstration Week", May 11 to 18, 1924, has recently been published.

After Demonstration Week is past, Better Homes in America will engage in research in the problems of this broad field, until the period of its 1925 campaign. Its publications can be secured by writing National Headquarters, Better Homes in America, 1653 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.

## INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE AND HOUSING

The International Labor Office, with headquarters at Geneva and of whom the American correspondent is Leifur Magnusson at 1653 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, has shown a very considerable interest in the subject of Housing. At the present time in anticipation of the International Congress on Housing which is scheduled to be held some time during the year 1924—but which has heretofore been postponed unavoidably from year to year and which may suffer the same fate again this year—the International Labor Office has prepared a series of studies on the Housing situation in the more important countries. These studies are designed to sketch rapidly the history of the housing movement in each country followed by a statement of the extent and gravity of the housing shortage—a situation which is practically universal throughout Europe.

A special portion of this Report is to be devoted to restrictive legislation and is an analysis of the remedies proposed for removing the shortage. The sources of the information upon which the study is based are almost entirely official, much of the information having been obtained by special request from the different governments, and representatives of each government have carefully read over the statements prepared by the Office covering the situation in their country.

All students of housing who desire to have information with regard to the situation in Europe can apply to Mr. Magnusson with the full knowledge that he will be very glad to place at their disposal all information that he may possess and to obtain for them information from the Geneva office whenever it is possible so to do.

## THE HOME THE REALTORS' CENTRAL SYMBOL

Herb Nelson, the Executive Secretary of the National Association of Real Estate Boards in writing of the recent



business meeting held at Augusta, Georgia, at which the new officers were inducted into office and the programme of work of the Association for the coming year was carefully considered by representatives of local boards from all over the country, meeting with the officers and directors of the Central organization, calls attention to the fact that the Home was the central symbol of this ceremony. A representation of the American home carved from the wood of America's first home shrine, Mount Vernon, having been used as the central figure in the inaugural ceremonial at which the new president of the association, H. R. Ennis of Kansas City, was inducted into office.

In speaking of this phase of the work of the realtors Mr. Nelson had the following to say:

It is for Realtors to see that the great financial interests of our communities shall become available in the fullest degree for the building of homes and the wide growth of home ownership. It is for Realtors to bring together the man who has money for home investment and the man who needs that money. It is for Realtors to see that it shall be possible for every man who does a man's part in the world to be able to win his own home. And beyond this it is for Realtors, who are brought into consultation with the family at the time when it makes perhaps the most important decision of its family life, to see to it that the homes of America shall be real homes, fitted to the needs and the hopes of the families who are to center their lives there. It is for Realtors to see that the developing home areas of American cities grow beautifully and without blight, with no lack of the fundamentals of sound living.

As evidence of the high value placed by the Association upon the development of the American home may be cited the recent arrangement that has been entered into between the Home Builders and Subdividers Division of the National Association and the Architects' Small House Service Bureau. Through the coöperation of these two joint bodies arrangements have been made for the building of a group of demonstration homes in several different regions of the United States during the coming year, as part of a plan for putting

before home planners everywhere the possibilities of good structures for modest homes.

The National Association of Real Estate Boards through its local boards will take under its auspices the building of these dwellings, the supervisory service to be furnished by the regional bureau of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau, or by a member of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Any one undertaking to build a demonstration home must undertake also to duplicate it for the same price at least ten times in 60 days.

Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, New York City, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee and Portland, Oregon, are tentatively given as cities in which the demonstration homes are to be constructed. A newspaper and magazine publicity campaign will forward the idea of the introduction of good architecture into small home design.

## HOUSING IN RELATION TO INDUSTRY

A striking and valuable exposition of the relations of housing to industry is to be found in an address delivered before the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia some months ago by Bernard J. Newman, the efficient Managing Director of the Philadelphia Housing Association and reprinted in a 4-page pamphlet. Among the striking statements made by Mr. Newman may be cited the following remarks which immediately follow his description of the unsanitary old buildings in which so large a part of the population of Philadelphia is housed, as is the case in most cities. Mr. Newman says

Not less than 30,000 Philadelphians occupy such buildings. They are in large part industrial workers from whom their employers expect to obtain a full days' work for a full days' pay with loyalty to the firm that employs them. No specialist in the field of health, no employment manager with a sociological background for his job, no psychologist qualified to interpret mental reactions from adverse environment influences, would for one instant say that such a home area can produce that percentage of capable workers essential to man the machines of industry or to stand the strain of heavy manual labor.

Mr. Newman most effectively summarizes the cost of insanitary housing as follows:

Summarizing the consequences of insanitary housing, it is no exaggeration to say that its cost in a large percentage of cases is lowered vitality, excessive morbidity, high mortality and, insofar as the industrial workers are concerned, a drain upon physical stamina which is conducive to industrial over-fatigue. Artificial checks may reduce these effects but they do not eliminate the causes and whatever gain accrues from such artificial checks is lost as soon as they are lifted and the environment is enabled to effect its deteriorating reaction once again.

Insofar as industry must go to this source for its labor supply, or must see its labor supply driven to such areas for housing accommodations, industry is the loser. Yet one might well challenge industrial leaders in our cities today to show wherein they are cognizant of the effect of the bad housing under which their workers are living and, if cognizant, what constructive steps they are taking to improve such housing conditions as may be subnormal. It is true that better housing is gradually forcing its way, but it is a slow progress challenged on every hand by mistakes in municipal administration which retard its normally slow improvement.

Again Mr. Newman says:

It is an economy for industry to encourage the city employment of a sufficient number of such inspectors amply aided by adequate appropriations to do their work, thus only can insanitary conditions arising from the overcrowding in old buildings be kept in check. Far more important, though, is that phase of the programme which would encourage new dwelling construction. Employers throughout the country have found that workers who live in their own homes, which they have been assisted to purchase at prices within their reach, are more faithful in their employment and are more efficient in their production. Such employers have felt that it is a legitimate use of their capital to assist employees to build homes or to assist them to finance their homes. The

biggest need in this city today, so far as industrial stability is concerned, is an ample building programme for wage-earners' dwellings.

All students of the housing question will want to obtain a copy of this interesting address of Mr. Newman's which presumably can be obtained upon application to Mr. Newman at 130 South 15th Street, Philadelphia.

## AN OPPORTUNITY

We all have had the experience of paying no attention to a new book when it is first issued and then in later years making frantic efforts to obtain a copy to complete our library. Such has been the case for some years past with regard to many of the back volumes of "Housing Problems in America" and not only librarians, but students of Housing have been anxious to obtain missing volumes to complete their sets, as this series contains within itself practically a history of the Housing movement in the United States from 1910 on.

An unusual opportunity confronts persons desiring to complete their sets of this book in the fact that there has recently come into the hands of the National Housing Association a limited number of copies of several of the back volumes, viz., Volumes 2, 4, 7 and 8. While they last, copies of these back volumes can be obtained from the National Housing Association at the following prices, respectively, \$2, \$1.50, \$2 and \$3, net, postpaid.

## A NEW BOOK ON HOUSING

What is undoubtedly one of the most important books on the housing situation in the United States that has heretofore been published is the new volume of Proceedings of the National Housing Association entitled "Housing Problems in America", Vol. 9, just off the press and containing the Papers delivered at the recent National Housing Conference held at Philadelphia in December last.

While the discussions in this volume deal primarily with that phase of the housing question which is now uppermost in the public mind, viz., the Housing Shortage, the book is of extraordinary value and all persons should at once obtain a



copy. Only a limited edition has been printed and this will be soon exhausted. The book is a clothbound book of 408 pages and sells at \$3 net postpaid. Copies can be ordered from the National Housing Association, 105 East 22d Street, New York City.

## AN EXHIBIT OF COOPERATIVE HOUSING IN THE UNITED STATES

What is announced as the first exhibition of genuine co-operative housing in the United States will be held in the Sage Foundation Building, 130 East 22nd Street, New York City, opening on February 26th and continuing until March 2nd. This exhibit will be under the auspices of the United Neighborhood Houses of New York, Inc., of which Mrs. Emily S. Bernheim is the Executive Secretary. This is an Association of Settlements distributed throughout Greater New York.

In a recent statement announcing this Exhibition, Mrs. Bernheim said:

"The exhibit will comprise models showing every type of 100% cooperative apartment house in New York City. The exhibit will not show what can be done in the way of carrying on housing cooperatively, but what has already been done by working people in this city.

It will be a small exhibit of a big problem. The children of the settlements belonging to the United Neighborhood Houses of New York and students at Teachers College, Columbia University, are building the models and making the posters for the exhibit.

There will be models of tenement houses and apartments before they were turned into cooperative houses and after. An ideal apartment in each house will be shown as an indication of what is feasible. The working people who own their houses on the cooperative plan pay between \$25 and \$30 a month for their apartments in the main, although some pay as high as \$50. This rent is sufficient to pay the cost of maintenance as well as amortization.

One group of houses will be shown by models that represent investments of as low as \$100 per apartment in the upper east side of Manhattan. The housing experiments of the Finns in Brooklyn are a noteworthy and important exhibit of

real cooperative housing. These houses will be represented by models.

Those interested in arranging the exhibit feel that it will stimulate rent-payers in New York to make an attempt to solve their housing problems without external assistance. If no private capital is available for the purchase of houses to be occupied on the 100% cooperative basis, or if the State does not lend its credit toward such an enterprise, I am sure that public-spirited citizens will become sufficiently interested in the idea to point out to the working people the necessity for cooperative housing.

It has been demonstrated that cooperative housing brings down rents. Savings amount to between 20 and 40%. Our investigation shows that tenants in cooperatively owned houses are living in better sanitary conditions and for much lower rents than tenants in privately owned houses.

Each cooperative house is managed by a board of directors, elected by the tenants. The directors collect the rents and manage the house. Under the 100% cooperative plan a tenant-owner is not permitted to sublease his apartment, nor is he permitted to sell it for a higher price than he paid. If he is compelled to give up the apartment the directors have the privilege of buying it in for the other owners."

The exhibition will be open afternoons and evenings and no admission will be charged. Arrangements are now being made to have a special programme for each evening.

Recently in anticipation of this Exhibition, a group of clergymen of the leading churches of New York, were invited to make a tour of working people's cooperative apartment houses in Harlem and Brooklyn under the guidance and leadership of Gaylord S. White, President of the United Neighborhood Houses, Inc. In this tour 5 houses owned by tenants on a coöperative basis in East 102nd Street were visited as well as a group of similar coöperative houses owned and built by Finns in Brooklyn who have established a co-operative bakery, butcher shop and restaurant in the neighborhood.

Heretofore the cooperative apartment house movement has been confined to the well-to-do. It will be interesting to see whether the efforts to extend this movement to the working people will prove successful.

## BINGHAMTON SURVEYS ITSELF

The Real Estate Board of Binghamton, New York, has recently completed a survey as to its housing needs. This Report covers the number of houses under construction for the use of the owners, the number of double houses and apartment houses being constructed for rental purposes, as well as the number of single houses and apartments for rent at the time of the survey, the number of single and double family houses for sale, and the fluctuations, whether up or down, of rental charges.

It was found that during the past 3 years that there had been an increase of approximately \$5 per month in the lower priced apartments and \$15 per month in the more expensive ones, and this in spite of the fact that there had been a decrease of approximately 5% in the cost of building materials during the past six months.

The survey also disclosed that there was a shortage of loan money for new construction, that the labor market locally was comparatively easy and that residential construction was most active in the outlying districts.

## ALTOONA GRAPPLES WITH ITS HOUSING PROBLEM

The Altoona Chamber of Commerce "Housing Report" recently issued represents an earnest effort to consider all angles of their housing situation with a view to trying to find a way out. Their studies indicate the need of between 1600 and 2400 new homes to meet the demand. The Report presents interesting charts showing what has happened in the housing situation. The trend of the charts and graphs presents the picture familiar to practically all of our cities which have attempted to analyze what the high cost of building has done for housing.

The Committee's study included the sending out of a questionnaire to workers in industries with a view to trying to determine the exact type of homes needed. From 6,000 questionnaires sent out, 1200 were returned. The results are the same as other surveys have shown. Four, five and six rooms

constitute the greatest demand, the 6-room house being most popular and the 4-room house being the least popular.

Most of the 300 workers replying to the question as to how much they could pay for a house and lot indicated between \$3000 and \$4000. Some could pay between \$4000 and \$5000. Three-fifths could not make a first payment of as much as \$500, although there were some who could pay considerably more. As to monthly payments one-half indicated that they could pay between \$20 and \$30 a month; one-third between \$30 and \$40 a month, and only one-tenth could pay over \$40 a month. In other words Altoona's findings simply prove that its situation is exactly that of the average American city.

Keeping in mind the probability of industrial expansion indicated by facts gathered in the survey the Report emphasizes the need of houses for rent. Few builders are interested in constructing houses to rent. Homes with modern conveniences cannot be built to cost less than \$5000 or \$6000, upon which a monthly rental of between \$50 and \$60 would have to be charged. Yet the great need is for houses or flats that can be rented at between \$20 and \$30 a month. They recognize here a baffling problem and admit their inability to offer a solution.

The question of forming Chamber of Commerce committees to build houses is considered, but abandoned as of doubtful value. They consider it preferable to encourage the private building companies organized for profit. Construction loans for contractors they consider to be one of great importance and urge the necessity of a financial institution to finance the contractor during the building construction and to advance to him month by month the money necessary for building purposes in order that he may not have to tie up his money as his work progresses. They also advise that the loaning company should arrange for the first and second mortgages for the entire amount involved, less what the owner of the property is able to pay down. There is no company or person loaning money regularly in Altoona on second mortgages. Building Associations are unable to meet the demands for loans and their premiums are too high.

The local financial institutions are loaning as much as they can for home building, but it is insufficient. Some plan must be worked out, they conclude, for bringing in funds from the



outside. Their recommendation is therefore the formation of companies to make construction loans and at the completion of the buildings to take the first and second mortgages and then to sell the mortgages outside of the city of Altoona. At the same time they urge an educational campaign to convince investors that real estate mortgages are better investments than stocks and bonds, and to advise the public against investing money in doubtful projects.

Altoona will no doubt be better off and will have a better understanding of its housing needs from the fund of information presented in this Report. It cannot be said, however, that they have found the way out. They come back very largely to the question of boosting home-ownership, urging the construction of small houses and making financing easier. They put their faith mostly in home financing. From the experience of other sections of the country it is doubtful whether even the best facilities for financing home building will add much to the supply of houses or help the family that cannot afford to live in a house costing more than \$3000 or \$4000.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Executive Secretary, Cincinnati Better  
Housing League

## THE MENACE OF NEW YORK'S OLDER TENEMENTS

What may be considered by some as a counsel of perfection is the recent movement started by Peter C. Spence, Chief of the Bureau of Fire Prevention of the New York Fire Department, to try and bring about measures that would result in making the 75,000 old-law tenements less of a fire hazard than they are at the present time.

After describing the conditions which exist in these houses in which many hundreds of thousands of people live, houses that were built prior to 1901 and therefore have not been built according to the wiser requirements of the present tenement house laws, Mr. Spence points out that an average of 100 persons a year lose their lives through fire in New York City, and of these more than 50 of them in the old law tenement houses. He calls attention to the well known fact that there

has been practically not a single life lost in the new-law tenements and adds that most of the 50 lives lost in the old-law houses, could have been saved by proper installation and that now the Fire Department has decided to take action requiring the owners of these old-law houses to so alter them as to make them reasonably safe.

Mr. Spence points out very properly that the factory law protects employes in the place where they work and that such employes are nearly all young and vigorous people who are subjected to the factory hazard only 8 hours a day, but, he adds, there is no proper protection for the babies, children, the sick, the infirm and the aged who spend most of the 24 hours in the tenement houses.

Among the changes which the Bureau of Fire Prevention has decided to require in these old-law houses are the installation of automatic sprinklers, automatic fire alarms and manual fire alarms in those houses where the fire risk is great; these automatic fire alarms responding to the action of heat by means of thermostats.

It will be interesting to see how far Mr. Spence will be allowed to get with his programme before being halted by the courts or by the political powers that be; for, it is hardly conceivable that the owners of these old-law tenements will "take it lying down" and will not fight the enforcement of these requirements which will undoubtedly involve considerable expense in each case.

That the old-law houses are a menace there can be no question. Whether the remedy proposed is one that will really make them safe is in some doubt; for, it should be borne in mind that these houses are constructed with practically no fire protection other than the fact that their exterior walls are of brick, for the stairs are of wood, are inclosed in most cases with wooden partitions with numerous openings and the floors of every story are ordinary wooden beams. In addition it should be remembered that there are numerous vertical openings in the form of dumbwaiter shafts which add considerably to the fire menace.

## EDUCATING A STATE

### NEW JERSEY

The Board of Tenement House Supervision of New Jersey which began its work in 1904 and has therefore a record of 20 years behind it, necessarily at the beginning, because of its limited appropriation, had to confine its work to the larger municipalities of the state. Recently the Board has found it possible to send its inspectors to make house to house inspections in many smaller municipalities with populations of even less than 2500 persons in each. The Board reports that these inspections already disclose the need of their work and that in many instances there is a very serious lack of local supervision. In many cases there are no building codes and no enforcement, of building laws and every builder is a law unto himself.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Board is equipped with very far reaching legal powers it very wisely is proceeding upon the principle of persuasion and education. In a recent statement they point out that many owners in these smaller places do not at first take kindly to what they consider as outside interference on the part of the state authorities. Many of such owners have called up the offices of the Board and have received information which has been the means of saving them considerable money and when the alterations that they have been carrying on have been completed, they find they have a much better building and that their visit to the offices of the Board of Supervision have more than paid. A recent instance of this kind is that of a town where opposition to the work of the State Board was very apparent and where recently a public notice in the town newspaper has called attention to the genuine help received at the office of the Board of Tenement House Supervision.

Although the officials of the Board emphasize the results to be achieved through education and persuasion, still it should not be overlooked that it is a case of the iron hand in the velvet glove; for, the Board points out that where education and persuasion fail they intend to use the strong arm of the law to bring compliance with the law's provisions.

New Jersey is one of the few states where the maintenance of proper housing conditions is made a state function and it is gratifying therefore to see the way in which the Board of Tenement House Supervision is carrying on its work. It should have twice the appropriation that it now has to enable it to be properly staffed and to carry on the work that is so urgently needed through all communities in the state.

## WHEN A LAW IS NOT A LAW

A striking arraignment of a great American city, the city of Portland, Oregon, is contained in a report recently made with regard to the enforcement of the housing law in that city by Miss Jessie M. Short of Reed College.

Miss Short has recently completed a study of the exceptions granted in special cases, permitting individuals to violate the Portland Building Code, granted by the city officials of that city. In this report Miss Short points out that these exceptions and special "indulgences" have increased 600% over the number of exceptions granted during the first year after the Housing Code was enacted. In rendering this Report to the Consumers' League of Portland Miss Short charged that one apartment house had escaped the regulations of the code entirely by declaring itself to be a hotel, which it was not. The report has the following to say about this situation.

"After several years of investigation and study of the housing problem by the Portland Housing association and by trained social workers, the housing code of the city of Portland was passed by the council on January 22, 1919. This code provides minimum specifications for light, ventilation, fire protection, etc., in buildings that are to be used as dwellings.

In the housing code an 'advisory board' is provided for, to be appointed by the mayor, members of which 'by experience and training shall be qualified to advise with the city as to desirable housing regulations. The board may recommend that the council vary the provisions, etc.,' but it is expressly stated that this board is to make recommendations only in case the provisions of the code work some real injustice to the property owner, which hardship the board can alleviate without seriously interfering with the purpose of the code, and it is also stated repeatedly that this code shall furnish minimum standards for housing conditions.



During the first year in which the housing code was in operation nine special permits were granted; during the second year, 19; during the third year (April 1, 1922, to April 1, 1923), 55 were given or an increase over the second year of nearly 300 per cent., and an increase over the first year of 600 per cent. Many single ordinances grant permission for the setting aside of several provisions of the housing code in the construction of the same building.

In the case of a city which has such unbounded territory in which to expand as has Portland, and at a time when the right of people, particularly of children, to light, air and play space is being universally emphasized, it surely would seem unnecessary to cut down the very reasonable requirement of the code that a two-story apartment building shall have a rear yard not less than 12 feet in depth and a side yard four feet wide; and for higher buildings somewhat larger yard space. Yet, in the cases of not less than three dozen apartment houses these provisions have been disregarded, most of them in the last year. An eight-family apartment has a rear yard of four feet; other apartment buildings have rear yards of 30 inches, 18 inches and 12 inches, respectively; and one special ordinance permitted an apartment building to be placed on the lot line at the rear and on one side. Yet there are real estate dealers in Portland who buy the lots surrounding their own homes to insure themselves against having their views obstructed, who do not see the need of a housing code.

In a number of other respects the special ordinances permit violation of principles of sanitation and safety, none, perhaps, more than the provisions against fire."

The conditions disclosed by this Report are not creditable to the city of Portland and its citizens should at once put an end to the conditions complained of.

## RECENT COURT DECISIONS IN ZONING

There have been an unusual number of court decisions with reference to Zoning Laws handed down in recent months, which in the cities concerned have been considered adverse to the cause of Zoning. Some of these are of considerable importance, others deal with technical aspects of Zoning and have no bearing upon the fundamental principles involved.

Among these decisions may be noted the following:

## A BUTTRESSING DECISION

What is undoubtedly the soundest, best balanced and most helpful opinion that has thus far been handed down by the courts in this country in support of the validity of Zoning Ordinances, is to be found in the opinion of Justice Owen of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, the highest court of that state, handed down a few weeks ago.

In the case of *State ex rel. Charles Carter vs. William D. Harper, Building Commissioner of the City of Milwaukee*, Justice Owen reviews at considerable length and with a thorough knowledge of the decisions heretofore handed down by the courts in this country, practically all of the fundamental considerations which enter into the exercise of the police power in Zoning ordinances.

The case at bar arose from the efforts of the proprietor of a wholesale and retail milk and dairy product business to enlarge his plant which was located in a residential district as established by the Milwaukee Zoning Ordinance. Following the usual line of argument in such cases, the property owner in this case claimed that the ordinance was unreasonable and oppressive and deprived him of the equal protection of the laws and took from him his property without due process of law and without just compensation.

Justice Owen in his opinion disposes of all these contentions; and, if his opinion is followed by the highest courts of other states, there should in future be no difficulty in sustaining reasonable Zoning Ordinances at every point. As he says, discussing this question of taking of property without due compensation:

It has long been settled, however, that these constitutional provisions interpose no barrier to the exercise of the police power of the state.

After citing certain cases he says:

These cases establish the principle that whether a given situation presents a legitimate field for the exercise of the police power placing restraints upon the use of property or upon personal conduct, depends upon whether the situation presents a reasonable necessity for the im-

position of restraint in order to promote the public welfare, and whether the means adopted bear a reasonable relation to the end sought to be accomplished.

Again he says :

It is thoroughly established in this country that the rights preserved to the individual by these constitutional provisions are held in subordination to the rights of society.\*\*\*\*\* But incidental damage to property resulting from governmental activities, or laws passed in the promotion of the public welfare, is not considered a taking of the property for which compensation must be made. This has been stated over and over again, but probably as lucid a discussion of the principle will be found in *C. B. & Q. Railway v. Drainage Commissioners*, 200 U. S. 561 as anywhere, where it is held, in the language of the syllabus :

“Uncompensated obedience to a regulation enacted for the public safety under the police power of the State is not taking property without due compensation, and the constitutional prohibition against the taking of private property without compensation is not intended as a limitation of the exercise of those police powers which are necessary to the tranquility of every well-ordered community, nor of that general power over private property which is necessary for the orderly existence of all governments.”

Again on this question of compensation Justice Owen says :

He who is limited in the use of his property finds compensation therefor in the benefits accruing to him from the like limitations imposed upon his neighbor.

No better citation as to the extent of the police power can be given than that cited by Judge Owen from the case of *Noble State Bank vs. Haskell*, 219 U. S. 104, as follows :

It may be said in a general way that the police power extends to all the great public needs, *Canfield v. U. S.*, 167 U. S. 518. It may be put forth in aid of what is sanctioned by usage, or held by the prevailing morality or

strong and preponderant opinion to be greatly and immediately necessary to the public welfare.

## PURPOSE OF ZONING LAWS

What is probably the most valuable part of Judge Owen's decision for all persons interested in the subject of Zoning, is his clear-cut enunciation of the purposes of Zoning and of the legality of such Zoning laws as that under review. On this subject he has the following to say:

The legislation authorizing so-called Zoning ordinances is of comparatively recent origin, and it is not unnatural that those adversely affected should regard them as an unjust and unwarranted interference with their property rights. The question of whether such ordinances fall legitimately within the realm of the police power has been considered by a few courts, presently to be noted, with conflicting results. The pioneer nature of the legislation requires that it have careful consideration, tested by the fundamental principles to which we have alluded. We are required to consider whether such ordinances have any reasonable tendency to promote the public morals, health or safety or the public comfort, welfare or prosperity.

The purpose of the law is to bring about an orderly development of our cities; to establish residence districts into which business, commercial and industrial establishments shall not intrude, and to fix business districts and light industrial districts upon which heavy industrial concerns may not encroach. This is no new idea, although it has but recently taken the form of legislation. Every one who has observed the haphazard development of cities, the deterioration in the desirability of certain residential sections by the encroachment of business and industrial establishments upon and into such sections, resulting in the consequent destruction of property values and in the ultimate abandonment of such sections for residential purposes, has appreciated the desirability of regulating the growth and development of our urban communities.

The home seeker shuns a section of a city devoted to industrialism and seeks a home at some distance from the



business center. A common and natural instinct directs him to a section far removed from the commerce, trade and industry of the community. He does this because the home instinct craves fresh air, sunshine and well-kept lawns—home association beyond the noise of commercial marts and the dirt and smoke of industrial plants. Fresh air and sunshine add to the happiness of the home and have a direct effect upon the wellbeing of the occupants. It is not uncommon to witness efforts of promoters to preserve the residential character of their additions by placing covenants in their deeds restricting the use of the property to residential purposes and, in some instances, requiring the erection of a home according to specified standards. It cannot be denied that a city systematically developed offers greater attractiveness to the home seeker than a city that is developed in a haphazard way. The one compares to the other about as a well ordered department store compares to a junk shop. If such regulations stabilize the value of property, promote the permanency of desirable home surroundings, and if they add to the happiness and comfort of the citizens, they thereby promote the general welfare.\*\*\*\*\*

The benefits to be derived by cities adopting such regulations may be summarized as follows: They attract a desirable and assure a permanent citizenship; they foster pride in and attachment to the city; they promote happiness and contentment; they stabilize the use and value of property and promote the peace, tranquility and good order of the city. We do not hesitate to say that the attainment of these objects affords a legitimate field for the exercise of the police power. He who owns property in such a district is not deprived of its use by such regulations. He may use it for the purposes to which the section in which it is located is dedicated. That he shall not be permitted to use it to the desecration of the community constitutes no unreasonable or permanent hardship and results in no unjust burden.

The decision also deals at considerable length with the question raised as to the legality of basing the exercise of police power regulations solely upon aesthetic considerations,

and what Judge Owen says with reference to that phase of the question is pioneer work and will be found in a few years to be generally accepted doctrine, we believe, by the Bench of this country. Keeping to the question that had been raised of basing such regulations upon aesthetic considerations which was in reality in no sense an issue in this case, Justice Owen says:

It is sometimes said that these regulations rest solely upon aesthetic considerations.\*\*\*\*\*It seems to us that aesthetic considerations are relative in their nature. With the passing of time, social standards conform to new ideals. As a race, our sensibilities are becoming more refined, and that which formerly did not offend cannot now be endured. That which the common law did not condemn as a nuisance is now frequently outlawed as such by the written law. This is not because the subject outlawed is of a different nature, but because our sensibilities have become more refined and our ideals more exacting. Nauseous smells have always come under the ban of the law, but ugly sights and discordant surroundings may be just as distressing to keener sensibilities. The rights of property should not be sacrificed to the pleasure of an ultra-aesthetic taste. But whether they should be permitted to plague the average or dominant human sensibilities, well may be pondered.

This decision of the Wisconsin Supreme Court contains so much else of value to the cause of Zoning that every student of the Zoning movement will find it profitable to study the full text of it in detail.

## A REACTIONARY DECISION

In striking contrast to this important decision of the Wisconsin Court is the "four to three" decision handed down in October by the Supreme Court of Missouri, a decision which has taken from the property owners of that state every opportunity for protection which the law affords their fellow citizens in practically every other state throughout the country.

It is this sort of a "four to three" decision by which practically one man is enabled to invalidate the action of the legislature of a

state and make useless the expressed public sentiment of the people of that state that has led to the present public unrest and attitude of resentment toward the courts with a demand that "Four to three" decisions shall be done away with and that laws duly enacted by our legislative bodies shall not be declared invalid except by such preponderating unanimity of judgment on the part of the highest court as to justify the making void of the legislative action.

After reading the majority opinion in this St. Louis case, *State ex rel. Penrose Inv. Co. et al. vs. James N. McKelvey*, one is led to wonder what is to happen in the United States where such a situation is possible. It is not encouraging to national consciousness or unity, or to solidarity of thought as a nation that it should be possible to protect people in the enjoyment of their property rights and secure to them safety and convenience of living in the State of Wisconsin and deny them such rights in the State of Missouri.

If such decisions are likely to be handed down in future, it will not be far distant before an overwhelming demand will come for federal legislation on all important subjects and a gradual taking away from our state legislatures and state courts of most of the powers they now exercise. There is a constantly increasing tendency throughout the country to demand uniform laws and to seek remedies at Washington for intolerable situations which heretofore our state legislatures and state courts have been able to deal with.

In the case at Bar the constitutionality of the St. Louis Zoning Ordinance was tested in the case of a man who wished to construct and operate an electrically driven factory for the manufacture of artificial ice in a district which the Zoning Ordinance had classified as a residential district.

The decision is a most unfortunate one. One wonders whether this might not have been a very different decision if the city of St. Louis had, like other communities, proceeded under a carefully drawn enabling act in which the State Legislature had specifically granted to the city the specific powers to divide the city up into various districts and to regulate the uses of buildings in those districts along certain lines. The city of St. Louis, however, did not proceed under such enabling act, but assuming that the general powers granted to it under its charter permitted the enactment of a Zoning Ordinance proceeded to the enactment of

such an ordinance. These general powers, however, dealt primarily with enabling the city to prohibit uses that were obviously detrimental to the health of the community and the suppression of nuisances as popularly understood. While it is true that the language used was somewhat broader than this, yet it is a fair statement that the general purport of the charter provision was along such lines. We believe that if, instead of proceeding under these powers the city of St. Louis had been proceeding under such definitely granted powers as are found in the Standard Zoning Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce, or to be found in the Enabling Act of New York State, the decision of the court might have been quite different.

Notwithstanding this fact the decision, however, is an amazing one; for, it ignores the well-recognized principles of police power, the decisions of the federal and state courts with reference to that power and practically brushes aside all of the decisions hitherto handed down in connection with Zoning Laws by both the federal courts and the courts of other states. It confuses police power with eminent domain and holds that practically any attempt to provide for Zoning is the taking of property which must be compensated for. When one considers the decisions of both the federal and state courts on police power, one literally stands amazed at this extraordinary decision.

That this view is not an individual one is evidenced by the scholarly minority opinion concurred in by three of the seven judges written by Justice J. P. White. If one additional judge had been of the same view as these three judges, this minority decision would have been the majority decision and would have set a standard for the courts of all of the other states in the country with its scholarly, comprehensive and sound analysis of the questions at issue. In that minority opinion Justice White says among other things the following:

I am unable to agree to the conclusions reached in the majority opinion. The effect of that conclusion, instead of protecting the citizens of St. Louis in the enjoyment of their property rights, is to render the city powerless to protect them. The person, the use of whose property is restricted alone is considered. The great majority, the enjoyment of whose property requires such restriction, are ignored. In balancing the alleged individual right against the public good the latter is given no weight.



The opinion distinctly excludes from consideration the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the Zoning ordinance, or of the particular part of it affecting the relators' case. A consideration of the "legal propriety" of the classification of districts, which would involve an admission of the validity of the ordinance is disclaimed. The right of the city to provide for future growth and development by dividing its territory into residence districts, commercial districts, industrial districts etc., is denied. The Legislature cannot invest the city with power to segregate its factories. \* \* \* The ordinance in its avowed purpose and in its effect is to provide for the future; for the orderly, symmetrical, healthful and prosperous growth of the city; to make it attractive to business enterprises, a healthful, secure and enjoyable place to live. These purposes, we are told, cannot be carried into effect in the exercise of police power because of the restrictions in the Federal and State Constitutions above noted.

That the Court in the majority opinion has ignored the general trend of court decisions with reference to the constitutionality of Zoning ordinances is quite evident to at least three of the judges of that court, for in the minority opinion they say:

The majority opinion does not cite any case which holds that a general Zoning ordinance is unconstitutional.

And again:

The great weight of authority, both Federal and State, is to the effect that a reasonable Zoning ordinance is constitutional, and the determination of what is reasonable varies with the changing conditions incident to modern development and civilization. The effect of the ruling in the majority opinion is that before an occupation or a building can be prohibited in a given territory it must be proven as a fact to be nuisance, as nuisances have been defined and determined heretofore.

After pointing out that the same court had held the billboard ordinances to be constitutional as a valid exercise of the police power and arguing that the Zoning ordinance must equally be constitutional if the billboard ordinance is to be so held, the minority opinion goes on to say in discussing the majority opinion as to the limitations of the constitution:

If the Constitution is so inflexible in its terms, so rigid in its specific restrictions, as to defeat its own ends; if its general principles cannot apply to changing conditions due to increased population, congested areas, new methods of transportation, new development of sanitary science, new inventions to meet multiplying needs, the multitude and variety of new and powerful mechanical appliances—all presenting problems affecting health and safety which the framers of the Constitution could not possibly have foreseen—then it is necessary to “alter or abolish” it.

We regret that limitations of space prevent us from quoting further from this admirable minority opinion which may well serve as an arsenal of facts for the support of Zoning ordinances throughout the country.

At the same time that this decision was handed down, or shortly thereafter, the Supreme Court also handed down its decision in another Zoning Case known as the case of the *City of St. Louis versus Evraiff*, where the provision of the Zoning ordinance at issue was the validity of a section which prohibited the use of a building for the storage of scrap iron, rags and junk in a light industry district which was shown to be a densely populated section. After withholding the decision for a period of 2 years, the court in an opinion written by a justice no longer on the Bench, held that the Zoning Ordinance in this respect is void and unreasonable and oppressive.

Our sympathies go out to the people of Missouri, and especially the people of St. Louis; for, they stand in a very extraordinary situation. We believe, however, that they will rise to the occasion and demand a complete and modern state enabling act for Zoning or else amend their Constitution, if that be necessary, so as to make it possible for communities throughout their state to protect their citizens in the enjoyment of their property rights through Zoning ordinances. The first thing to do, however, is to secure from the state legislature a proper Zoning Enabling Act which will make it plain beyond any question of doubt the intention of the legislature to confer such power upon the cities of that state.

## NEW JERSEY IN THE DOLDRUMS

The New Jersey Courts have shown considerable hostility toward Zoning laws in recent years due possibly to the unusually

large number of Zoning ordinances enacted in that state and to the confused status of the enabling acts under authority of which such laws have been passed.

It is unfortunate that New Jersey should not have had a proper State Enabling Act. Undoubtedly if it had had such an act, many of the decisions which have been handed down would never have been written.

One of the most serious decisions, however, that has been thus far handed down and which addresses itself not to any technicality but to one of the fundamental questions involved in Zoning, namely, the right to prohibit store buildings in private residence districts, is found in the recent decisions of the New Jersey Supreme Court in the so-called "Nutley Case". In this instance a Greek named Ignaciunas sought to erect a grocery store in the village of Nutley in a district which had been set aside under the Zoning Ordinance as a residential district and from which business had been excluded.

In a unanimous decision of the three judges of that court handed down this summer the court held that the provision of the Zoning ordinance prohibiting the erection of a store in a residential district was "void and violative of the rights of private property guaranteed by the State and Federal Constitutions; Second, that said prohibition was not a valid exercise of the police power in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare."

If this decision is sustained upon appeal to the highest court of the state, then the cause of Zoning in New Jersey has suffered a serious setback and it will be necessary in all probability to obtain a constitutional amendment giving the legislature the power in specific terms to enable the municipalities throughout that state to enact Zoning ordinances. That such a constitutional amendment would have overwhelming support at the polls, there can be no question.

In view, however, of the decisions in other states sustaining similar provisions of Zoning ordinances identical with the case at issue here, it is to be hoped that the appellate court, when it reaches a decision in this matter will reverse the lower court and hold that the Zoning ordinance is a valid exercise of the police power.

The court in this case seems to have had the same confusion of mind with reference to the taking of private property and the failure to properly distinguish between police power and the power



of eminent domain as was evidenced by the court in the St. Louis case already referred to. Speaking to this point the court says :

The substantial value of property lies in its use. If the right of use be denied, the value of the property is lessened or destroyed. A law which forbids a *certain* use of property deprives it of an essential attribute. The result in effect is a proscription of its ownership.

This line of reasoning is singularly defective and ignores the constant restrictions imposed upon the use of property by the courts in the exercise of the police power of the state which have been uniformly sustained by both the Federal and the State courts. Because a law forbids a *particular use* of property in no sense deprives that property of its essential attributes, for there is no inherent right to use property for any purpose whatsoever irrespective of its effect upon the community, but only the right to make *some* use of the property. If the Zoning Ordinance in question had deprived this property of *all* use, or if it had been shown that the property could not have been profitably used for any other purpose than that of a store, then the reasoning of the court might have had some justification, but such was not the fact.

The basis of the police power is a triple one and the general welfare is quite as important a basis for that power as are health, safety or morals. Heretofore, however, in those cases where police power has been under review it has been found as a rule feasible to justify the exercise of police power either upon the ground of health, safety or morals, but the time has now come when the courts of the country will have to consider the question of what constitutes the general welfare and will unquestionably sustain laws such as our Zoning laws are, solely upon the basis that they are enacted for the public welfare.

To say that the people of a given community shall not have the power, acting through their duly elected legislative bodies to determine the kind of orderly development that their community shall have is something that the citizens of this country will not longer tolerate.

The Nutley case is now up on appeal. The New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, acting in coöperation with 60 or more municipalities in the State of New Jersey at the initiative of the League of Municipalities, has carried the case up on appeal. A decision in the near future from this court is expected.



In connection with the Nutley case and the earlier Westfield case under which the court held invalid a Zoning ordinance which forbade the occupancy of two-family dwellings in a single family district, William D. Ennis, Vice President of the Technical Advisory Corporation of New York, which has had much to do with the drafting of the various New Jersey Zoning ordinances, has prepared an interesting pamphlet entitled "The New Jersey Zoning Decisions" in which, within the compass of some 10 pages he discusses the fundamental questions involved in these two cases and the ultimate outlook for the State of New Jersey. In this interesting memorandum which all students of Zoning practice will wish to obtain, he very rightly says:

Upon analysis, however, the great preponderance of so-called unfavorable decisions have been decisions relating to badly done Zoning: to improprieties in mapping, unreasonableness in ordinances or ambiguity in enabling acts. The general trend of decisions when critically examined is strongly in favor of comprehensive Zoning.

An admirable statement showing that Zoning is a development of the processes of self-government and a logical next step from the enactment of laws for the protection of property is found in the following statement:

Zoning is one of the highest phases of self-government. The law first took cognizance of crimes against persons. That job has been perhaps 90% done. Then it undertook to prevent wrongs against property, and that job has been pretty well done. Under the Zoning procedure, law steps in and undertakes to prevent those wrongs against the general welfare which are too intangible to be classed as attacks on property or wrongs against persons but which, nevertheless, do attack and wrong both. The enactment of a Zoning ordinance is one of the best proofs of a community's capacity for self-government.

## WHAT IS THE PUBLIC WELFARE?

A decision recently handed down by the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, California, holding that a Zoning ordinance which forbids the construction of a tenement house to be occupied

by 4 families in a private residence district is void and invalid, is one calculated to "make the judicious grieve".

The circumstances under which this decision has been rendered are most unfortunate. It is one of those cases where the local authorities sought to exceed their power and to impose upon an owner of private property restrictions that were obviously improper under the peculiar circumstances of the particular case. For, in this instance the owner secured a permit to build a 4-family apartment house—a flat building—in a district which at that time had not been declared to be a private residence district under the Zoning ordinance.

Shortly after the permit was issued the city authorities cancelled the permit on the ground that the City Council had ordered its revocation for the reason that it was about to pass an ordinance which would prohibit the erection or construction of flats in that part of the city. (*G. L. Miller and Frances Miller v. Board of Public Works of the City of Los Angeles.*)

It is obvious that this action amounted to rank confiscation and gross unfairness, and it is not strange that with that atmosphere surrounding the case the court should have approached the legal questions involved in this proceeding with a strong feeling of bias against the requirements of a law which made such an invasion of private rights possible. Unfortunately, however, instead of holding that the action of the local authorities in this case was void because of its being oppressive, unreasonable and confiscatory, the court took up the main contention raised by the plaintiff to the effect that the forbidding of the erection of multiple dwellings or any house containing more than two families in this particular private residence district was not within the police power and was therefore void.

Again, it is unfortunate that this should have been a borderline case. Had the building in question been a tenement house for 20 families, we are of the opinion that the decision of the court might have been different, and that in this case the California court might have followed the admirable decision handed down in the East Cleveland case and held that great apartment houses were an intrusion upon the quiet and the peace and the well-being of a private residence district.

But in this instance the building involved was not a gigantic apartment house of this type but a small 4-family house, to all outward appearances no doubt closely resembling two 2-family

houses, and so far as the neighborhood was concerned perhaps unrecognizable from two separate 2-family houses which under the ordinance would have been entirely legal.

After reviewing carefully the question of whether a 4-family house *per se* could be held to be injurious to health or safety or public morals and deciding that it could not, the court then proceeds to consider briefly the question of whether such a building was contrary to the public welfare. Here in our opinion is where the court seriously erred, holding that the realm of public welfare was so nebulous, so vague and indefinite, that it was not within the power of a state exercising its police power to control conditions under which a city might develop from the point of view of the public welfare.

If such an opinion had been held 20 years ago it would not be surprising, but in view of the declarations of the United States Supreme Court as to the extent of the police power and the unwillingness of that court to set limits to it, and the recognition by that court of the fact that it is a growing, changing and expanding thing—the conception of its extent and its limitations changing with the changed conception of public affairs throughout the country—and the decisions that have been rendered by many of our state courts dealing with this same broad question of police power, it is rather striking that the California court in this case should have construed the law so narrowly, and not been able to look ahead and to have realized that there are considerations based on health and safety as well as general welfare which could well support an invocation of the police power to protect private residence neighborhoods. As pointed out in the East Cleveland case, a one or two family house is a better fire hazard than a multi-family house. It is quieter, with less rubbish and dust, fewer deliveries, less danger of contagion, etc.

While it would be most unfortunate to attempt to carry *this* case up to the United States Supreme Court, it is to be hoped that a new case will be brought in California in which this question of prohibition of apartment houses in private residence districts, based solely upon the injuriousness of such developments to the public welfare, can be met squarely as the sole issue and the case taken to the United States Supreme Court and there settled—and settled for all time.

## AN UNREASONABLE ZONING ORDINANCE

An interesting case has recently been decided by the Appellate Division of the Second Department of New York State with reference to the reasonableness of the New Rochelle Zoning ordinance. In this case a certain street had been Zoned as residential when it was obviously a street that was a business street. The Zoning commissioners in making it a residential street had apparently yielded to the desire of certain property owners to maintain a vista of a private residential park which opened up from the property in question and had let these considerations sway their decision against the natural development of the neighborhood, which was a main thoroughfare, for business purposes. The lower court held that the ordinance in this respect was unreasonable and invalid and the appellate court in a most interesting decision handed down in the case of *Isenbarth versus Bartnet, Inspector of Buildings of the City of New Rochelle*, sustained the decision of the lower court, holding that:

Where a Zoning ordinance, restricting the use of property fronting on a privately owned park to "residential purposes", was primarily passed with a view of maintaining unimpaired the vista of the park, and such property was located upon one of the principal business streets of the community, *held* that such ordinance was "legally unreasonable", that the police power of a city cannot, for aesthetic purposes, be used to deprive the owner of property of its full beneficial use, but only for purposes of the health, safety, convenience and public welfare of the people at large.

This is probably as interesting a case as could be brought showing the value of Zoning as contrasted with the efforts to secure the same results through private restriction and illustrating also the way in which Zoning functions and the opportunity that there is for property owners who have a legitimate grievance to get prompt redress through the courts. It is clearly a case where those responsible for the Zoning of the city erred and the courts were prompt to correct such error.



## THE FIFTH AVENUE CASE

A decision which has been widely heralded by a few vociferous opponents of Zoning in other cities but which has no bearing whatsoever upon the fundamental principles of Zoning, is the so-called Fifth Avenue case.

The original New York Zoning ordinance enacted in 1916 limited the height of buildings erected on Fifth Avenue above 59th Street to one and one-half times the width of the street. In November, 1921, the local legislative body of New York City changed this requirement making the district above 59th Street a three-fourths times district, limiting the height of future buildings erected in that section of Fifth Avenue to 75 feet, the Avenue being 100 feet in width.

Certain property owners feeling that they were injured in their property rights promptly tested this action of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment. And the lower court, the New York Supreme Court, in a decision handed down in March, sustained the Zoning Resolution at every point holding that it was a proper exercise of the police power (see *Housing Betterment* for July, 1923, page 301-2, *Matter of Palmer vs. Mann et al.*). This decision was promptly appealed to the higher court. Now the Appellate Division has handed down a decision setting aside the decision of the lower court, but strictly on technical grounds, the point at issue being that under the New York Charter where it is sought to change the character of an established zone, there must be a unanimous vote by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, the local legislative body, before such change can be effected, if a written protest by 20% of the frontage is filed.

When this question was made the principal issue the city contended that inasmuch as the city of New York was a property owner of a considerable portion of the property affected through its ownership of Central Park immediately opposite the lots in question, that a unanimous vote therefore was not necessary in the Board of Estimate and Apportionment inasmuch as those opposing the change in the ordinance did not have under these conditions 20% of the frontage affected.

The Appellate Division in its decision holds that this contention is not well taken and that the ordinance was defective in form.

We believe that the court rightly so held and that the proceedings in this case were not in accordance with law. This has no connection with the merits of the case or with the main issue that has been raised, viz., as to the reasonableness of the requirement limiting the height of buildings in this particular part of Fifth Avenue to the comparatively low height of 75 feet. About this opinions will necessarily differ.

It is announced that the City of New York intends to appeal this decision which we think is regrettable, for we believe that the Appellate Division was entirely right in its holding and that the ordinance was defective. The proper procedure it would seem to us for the city to now undertake is to secure a unanimous vote in the Board of Estimate before changing the District in question, or else specifically include the Central Park front in the district sought to be changed. In the latter case it is not likely that a 20% protest could be filed.

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SHIELD

There have been a number of other decisions handed down recently by the courts sustaining Zoning laws and dealing to a greater or less extent with the technical side of the question.

An interesting decision strongly in contrast with much that has been written by the courts of this country on the question of considering aesthetic factors in an exercise of the police power, is found in the decision of the Louisiana Supreme Court for the Parish of Orleans in the case of *State ex rel. Civello v. City of New Orleans*. In this case the Appellate Court held that:

Aesthetic considerations, fostering comfort or happiness and consequent values generally of the property in the neighborhood, are matters of general welfare, within the purview of the police power.

## A BOARD OF APPEALS REVERSED

An interesting case showing how the courts do not necessarily sustain Boards of Appeals in all instances, but consider questions on their merits is found in a New York City case *People ex rel. Ventres v. Walsh*. In this case the Fire Commissioner who is charged with the enforcement of the law against illegal uses, issued an order prohibiting the continuance of the sand-digging industry on a given tract of land in a district which was a resi-

dential district under the Zoning Ordinance. An appeal was taken to the Board of Appeals which reversed his order and the city on behalf of the Fire Commissioner appealed from that decision to the court. The Supreme Court held that the order of the Board of Appeals was contrary to the law and the facts and therefore not valid under any of its powers to vary the Zoning Resolution. The court sustained the Fire Commissioner in his original order on its merits. .

### STORES IN RESIDENCE DISTRICTS HELD ILLEGAL

In striking contrast to the decisions of some other states but in our judgment a sound decision is the decision of the Louisiana Supreme Court in 6 cases known as *State v. City of New Orleans* and *Liberty Oil Company v. City of New Orleans*.

In these cases the constitutionality and validity of the Zoning ordinance of the City of New Orleans were at issue. The court held that: "A municipal ordinance forbidding business establishments in designated residence streets, does not necessarily rest on aesthetic considerations, but may be sustained on considerations of public health, safety, comfort or general welfare; and if these considerations could have justified the ordinance, the court must assume that they did justify it, and cannot take issue with the City Council."

This is in refreshing contrast to the directly counter opinion held by the New Jersey Courts.

### CALIFORNIA SUSTAINS ZONING

In a recent case the California Superior Court again sustained a Zoning ordinance prohibiting public garages and stores in a residential district in the case of *Motor Home Inc. v. Hedden, Building Inspector, City of Long Beach*. In this case the court held (following the *Hadachek* decision) that as the question of reasonableness in the ordinance was certainly one in which reasonable minds may differ, it must be held by the court to be valid, adding that the court will not substitute in such a case its judgment for that of the legislature. The court also disposed in short order of certain technical objections that had been raised in this case one of which was rather naïve to say the least, the appellant raising the issue that as the ordinance permitted the continuance of non-conforming uses this made the ordinance discriminatory,

unequal in operation and tended to create a monopoly and was therefore unreasonable and void. The court held that there was nothing to this contention.

### BOARD OF APPEALS EXCEEDED ITS POWERS

Another interesting New York case in which the court failed to sustain the Board of Appeals in their action is found in the case of *People ex rel. Parry v. Board of Appeals of the City of New York*, 121 *Miscellaneous Reports* 631.

In this case the Board of Appeals denied a petition for permission to erect a public garage in a business district and gave as a reason for their action that:

It was for the best interests of the community, and to prevent the desecration of the community.

An appeal from the Board of Appeals' decision was taken to the court on *certiorari* and the court held that the reason given by the Board of Appeals for their action:

Wholly fails to satisfy the requirements of the statute that such a return "must concisely set forth such other facts as may be pertinent and material and to show the grounds of the decision."

In other words, it was incumbent upon the Board of Appeals to show whether or not "there were practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships in carrying out the strict letter of the law." Failing this, the action of the Board the court held was illegal and the matter was therefore before the court on its merits. Consequently the writ was sustained and the Board of Appeals reversed and the permit granted.

### STORES IN RESIDENCE DISTRICTS CANNOT BE PROHIBITED IN MISSISSIPPI

In striking contrast to the decision of the Louisiana Court is a decision of the Supreme Court of Mississippi in the case of *Fitzhugh vs. City of Jackson* (97 *Southern Reporter* 190) where the court held, not only that the city of Jackson had not received from the legislature the express power permitting it to exclude stores from residential districts, and that there-



fore the ordinance was void, but went further and pointed out that even if authorized the ordinance and statute would be contrary to the state constitution.

Thus the merry dance goes on. One state holds that stores in residence districts are objectionable and that laws prohibiting them are quite valid and within the proper exercise of the police power. A neighboring state holds the contrary. What the outcome will ultimately be it is hard to say.

Only the actual thing decided, of course, constitutes a precedent, the side remarks of the court, the *obiter dicta*, do not affect future decisions. Many of these cases apparently against Zoning are sound and sensible as to the precise situation decided. Sometimes the instance is unreasonable or confiscatory. When, however, the court gets going on a case of bad Zoning, it usually spreads the opinion full of *obiter dicta*. The Nutley case is the only case thus far decided in the United States which is essentially opposed to reasonable Zoning.

## HEIGHT LIMITATIONS SUSTAINED

An interesting decision, though not dealing directly with Zoning but with a general statute limiting the height of buildings to a maximum of 100 feet throughout the state of Wisconsin, outside of the city of Milwaukee, was recently held valid by the Wisconsin Supreme Court in the case of *Klefish vs. Wisconsin Telephone Company*. Notwithstanding the fact that the law discriminated between conditions in a city of the size of Milwaukee and conditions in other parts of the state, the Supreme Court held the law to be valid which is in rather striking contrast to the famous decision of that court in the case of *Bonnet vs. Vallier* where some years ago the Wisconsin Tenement House Law was held to be invalid for the reason that it made a discrimination between conditions in Milwaukee and conditions in other parts of the state. Thus the world "do move."

## A FURTHER STEP IN ZONING A RETAIL TRADE DISTRICT

The three Zoning maps of Greater New York show allowable height, area and use of buildings. The kinds of use districts are residence, business and unrestricted. In business

districts not only new business buildings are allowed, but buildings which devote one-fourth of the floor space to light industry. The framers of the Zoning Resolution considered that it would be too drastic to prevent all new light industry in business districts. A millinery, clothing or jewelry store must have a workshop. Numberless small light industries are scattered throughout the business districts and are as suitable as the stores themselves.

The Save New York Association has pointed out that the Zoning of central Manhattan is insufficient because light industries, selling their wares at wholesale, cause the best commercial streets to be crowded with industrial workers and trucks. They say that if New York is to keep its reputation as the shopping and wholesale center of the country, it must do something to prevent further congestion on commercial streets. They justly claim that in central Manhattan the limitation of one-fourth floor space for light industry does not have the desired effect. Halls, toilets and storerooms take up considerable space in every large building. Then when necessary showroom and offices needed by light industries are subtracted, they say the light industry can occupy about as much space as it wants and still come within the one-quarter allowance.

It is claimed that the root of the trouble is that many light industries, like garments, millinery and fur, sell at wholesale and therefore need to employ large numbers of workmen and use many trucks. The suggestion is that the new Zoning district should exclude new establishments that manufacture and sell their products at wholesale, and should limit new light manufacturing establishments to those which sell their product at retail on the premises.

There is no doubt that it would be a great benefit to many commercial streets in central Manhattan and perhaps to some in other boroughs if they could be placed under Zoning regulations that would prevent sidewalks and roadways from becoming more congested. Retail shoppers, out-of-town buyers, theatre goers and office and store workers sufficiently crowd these streets without the addition of constantly increasing numbers of industrial workers and industrial trucks. There would be plenty of room outside of these central streets for new light industry establishments selling at wholesale.

The city as a whole would be benefited because it would be safer and more attractive to its thousands of yearly visitors.

Would a Zoning district that excluded new light industry establishments selling at wholesale be lawful? If it could be shown to the courts that sidewalks and road ways were made safer, that fire risk was less, that streets were more passable for fire and other emergency apparatus, and that health conditions generally were improved, it is likely that the new district would be upheld.

Some might claim that it would be unreasonable to prevent a manufacturer ever selling at wholesale. Doubtless this is true. The courts would not try to prevent it. Such sales would be incidental and not the principal business. It is quite certain that the city authorities could identify and prevent the new establishments which made their principal business the manufacture and sale at wholesale. The tendency of such new establishments, especially if large ones, would be to locate outside of the new district.

EDWARD M. BASSETT  
Counsel, New York Zoning Committee

## ZONING AND PRIVATE RESTRICTIONS

What is the difference? The Zoning regulations were established by the Board of Estimate under the police power for the protection of the safety and health of the community. They are like the fire limits and sanitary laws. Private restrictions are not imposed by law but are contracts between persons. Accordingly Zoning can regulate building height and open spaces because it relates to health and safety against fire. It can protect home districts against injurious uses, not because the value or looks are improved but because of quiet, street safety and sanitary surroundings. But if the Zoning regulations are not based on health, safety, morals and the general welfare, the courts will declare them void. Contracts between persons, however, can control any feature that is not frivolous or against public policy. Zoning, for instance, could not ordinarily be employed to prevent flat roofs or houses costing less than a specified sum. Private restrictions can be so employed and often are.

Zoning does not take the place of private restrictions. Zoning does not affect old restrictions in any way whatever. New private restrictions can be imposed, and often ought to be, to supplement Zoning. The two go hand in hand. Each stands entirely on its own feet. Litigants sometimes think that they can help out their Zoning views by showing the private restrictions to the court, or help out their private restriction views by proving Zoning. They never succeed.

That Zoning and private restrictions have nothing to do with each other is also shown by the method of enforcement. The city authorities enforce Zoning by refusing building permits or ousting unlawful uses. Individuals cannot ordinarily enforce Zoning although they can compel officials by mandamus to do their lawful duty. On the other hand the city officials cannot enforce private restrictions. Only the contracting parties or those who have a privity of contract can enforce them.

EDWARD M. BASSETT  
Counsel, New York Zoning Committee

## CINCINNATI ZONING ORDINANCE UP FOR ACTION

The City Planning Commission of Cincinnati has accepted the Building Zone Ordinance prepared for the Commission by the Technical Advisory Corporation and on November 27th presented it to the Council of the City of Cincinnati. A number of hearings have been held.

The chief opposition has come from the Building Owners and Managers Association and the Real Estate Board to the limitation on the height of buildings in the downtown sections. The Ordinance provides that the height of buildings in the congested business district may equal  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times the width of the street, and that above that height the building shall be set back according to scientific principles specified in the Ordinance. The Building Owners and Managers Association have issued a printed pamphlet violently attacking the limitation on the height of buildings, insisting that such limitation would be confiscatory and would hamper the growth of the city. They argue that Cincinnati has no congestion such as New York and Chicago and that at the present time there is no necessity whatsoever for *any* limitation



on the height of buildings. They maintain that street congestion is not due to the height of office buildings, but to theaters, department stores and other such places which attract much larger crowds of people than do the office buildings.

The Real Estate Board, while approving the general principle of Zoning, has supported the Building Owners and Managers Association in its objection to any height limitation. The business men of the community, who know very little about the scientific underlying principles of Zoning and particularly the height of buildings, and whom it has been very difficult to persuade to make a study of the matter, have been strongly influenced by these protests. There is every reason to believe that the strength of these groups is considerable.

At the last informal hearing when the objections to the height limitations in the downtown business districts were presented, Mr. George B. Ford, representing the Technical Advisory Corporation, suggested changing the height limitations to permit a height on the street line of twice the width of the street, plus a setback above that height in the ratio of 1 ft. of setback to every 4 ft. of height. Mr. Ford pointed out that such a revised provision would make possible the erection of any existing building in the city of Cincinnati with the exception of three. Whether or not this concession will satisfy the opposing interests remains to be seen. They may insist upon still further concessions, or they may oppose the entire ordinance if there is any height limit whatever.

There have been other objections raised to the Ordinance particularly from the Real Estate Board, who object to the open space requirements for apartment buildings in "Residence-B" districts, which are essentially the two-family house districts; they object to prohibiting stores in apartment houses in residence districts; and argue that the open space requirements for apartment houses in "Residence-B" districts are too great.

The Cincinnati ordinance is based upon very careful study of all the facts and is an excellent piece of work. It is unfortunate that Zoning ordinances have to be too technical for most people to understand them. It makes it difficult to secure as much intelligent support as would be possible if the ordinances were simpler.

The Cincinnati ordinance in limiting the number of families to the acre has endeavored to avoid the use of the term "family", which is unsatisfactory because a family may vary from 1 to 7

or 8 persons. What they have done, for instance, in "Residence-B" districts is to specifically provide the setback from the street, the size of side yards, the size of rear yards, the size of courts (if any are provided); and then to set down the principle that an apartment house if it is higher than three stories may not have a total floor area on all of its stories greater than would be permitted on the same lot by the three floors of a three story building. A similar method of preventing congestion is used in "Residence-C", the apartment house districts, except that the provisions are more liberal. This is one of the principal ways in which the Cincinnati Ordinance differs from the majority of Zoning ordinances so far enacted. The working out of the wording of these provisions has necessarily been difficult and tends to make the Ordinance rather more complicated and difficult to understand than some other Zoning ordinances.

The ordinance places a limitation on the row-house, permitting only four houses in a row in the "Residence-B" districts and providing that such row-houses shall not be more than two rooms deep. For all other dwellings in residence districts side yards are required on both lot lines.

The United City Planning Committee, composed of representatives from various city organizations interested in city planning, has been leading the battle for approval of the ordinance. It has taken the stand that they are not fighting for the detailed provisions of the ordinance, but are fighting for the passage of satisfactory Zoning regulations and are willing to accept such modifications of the original ordinance as the public hearings may show to be necessary. The Committee has been getting excellent publicity, the newspapers quoting almost daily statements from various cities in the country which have enacted Zoning ordinances, or giving space to comments by local authorities.

It seems probable that in view of the opposition to certain provisions of the ordinance, particularly the limitation on the height of buildings and the lack of genuine support from business interests, that the ordinance will not be enacted without a good many public hearings and much public discussion. The proponents of the ordinance are confident that after the first storm has lulled, the Ordinance will go calmly on its journey to passage.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Executive Secretary, Cincinnati  
Better Housing League

## TOWN-PLANNING A STATE

### MASSACHUSETTS

It is a difficult matter to write reports which are brief, accurate and at the same time convincing both to the technical man and to the man in the street. If you succeed in interesting only the technical man or only the general public you have failed to reach at least half your readers in these days. Certainly it is a test of patience, good judgment and consummate skill to reach both groups of readers.

Among readable and interesting documents of this kind intended for general circulation, the Annual Report of the Division of Housing and Town Planning of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should be mentioned. The material is arranged for quick review by the technical man, yet it is given with such full detail under the names of the cities and towns of the Commonwealth that every townsman is interested to read the records of his own locality and to compare his activities with those of his neighbors.

In a survey of sixteen pages the activities of all the Planning Boards of the State are recorded. Widely different methods of approach to Town Planning are in use by the 75 or more communities, but the need of comprehensive planning to guide the development of town growth is stirring the thoughts of every section of the State. Each community is studying one or more of the problems of future streets, street widenings, parks, playgrounds, school locations, water supply, sewers, town forests, civic centers, bill board regulation, hospital sites, anniversary celebrations, and many other matters.

The Division calls to the attention of all the Boards the fact that the City Planning movement in Massachusetts was originally based upon housing improvement. Shortly, however, other phases of Town Planning like street extensions, parks, school house sites, etc., gradually absorbed the attention of the Planning Boards to such a degree that housing improvements were forgotten. The Division recalls the responsibility of the local Boards in these first vital problems and reviews the unsystematic building laws throughout the state. Although legislation has done much to eliminate dark

rooms, overcrowded tenements and unsanitary toilets, the large problem still remains at nearly its full dimensions. Lists are given of cities and towns which have adopted Zoning plans or in which Zoning studies are in progress.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF  
Boston

## SIoux CITY TO BE ZONED

The City Planning Commission at Sioux City, Iowa, has been named as the official Zoning Commission, and the group is already reported as studying the details of the plan of procedure. It will not be long before Sioux City can be added to the list of Zoned communities in the United States.

In addition to Sioux City, Des Moines has recently voted to employ Harland Bartholomew, City Planning Consultant, to prepare a comprehensive City Plan including a Zoning plan.

Mason City in Iowa is also busy at work upon a Zoning ordinance under the leadership of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. T. A. Potter as chairman of the City Planning and Zoning Committee is devoting much time to the preparation of a comprehensive survey of that city with some 20 sub-committees at work. A comprehensive City Planning Exhibit is contemplated to be held during the winter. This work is being done in coöperation with the Engineering Extension Department of Iowa State College which is directing the work under the leadership of Rolland S. Wallis.

## A PUBLIC SERVICE RENDERED

An interesting example of the interest that a great newspaper takes in the cause of Zoning and the possibilities of public service which can be rendered through the cooperation of the press in that cause, is found in the example set by the *Chicago Tribune*, which, at the time the new Zoning Ordinance was enacted a year ago, published a complete copy of the ordinance and maps as a supplement to one of its regular issues selling this at the nominal price of 10¢, thus making it available for the man in the street who otherwise might not have any knowledge of a Zoning ordinance or of its effect upon his neighborhood.



The success of Zoning depends to so large an extent upon its being made known widely throughout any community that the example set by Chicago should be followed by every other community where Zoning is proposed.

We commend to the attention of Zoning practitioners the desirability of obtaining now two copies of this publication from the *Chicago Tribune* which can be done by sending 20¢ to that paper, one copy of this interesting publication to be kept in their files and the other copy to be used as propaganda material as a means of suggesting to the leading newspaper in the next town in which they prepare a Zoning ordinance the desirability of going and doing likewise.

## ZONING IN NEW YORK A CONTINUING SUCCESS

The New York Zoning Law having been in operation for more than 7 years affords an excellent example for how far Zoning has proved to be a success in a great metropolitan center like New York.

If there had been much opposition to Zoning or standards had been set too high in the original ordinance, it would be expected that one would find many changes made from the original maps by the local legislative body in New York, viz., the Board of Estimate and Apportionment.

Interesting figures bearing on the workings of the New York law were issued recently showing that in the 7 years from 1916 to 1922, inclusive, but 219 applications for changes were granted by the Board of Estimate out of a total of 381 asked for; 162 having been denied showing that the city authorities have not been too quick in making changes in the Zoning maps. As a result, the stabilizing of land values—one of the purposes which Zoning has in view has been brought about. Too ready change would not give that stable quality to a community that Zoning seeks to accomplish. Of the total changes made, 185 had to do with the "Use" districts; 29 had to do with the "Area" districts; and only 5 had to do with "Height". In the first year, 1916, the 4 changes all relaxed the restrictions; while in the last year, 1922, 14 of the changes relaxed the restrictions and 47 of them strengthened the law. In other words, in the first year, as was to be expected, there was no strengthening but some relaxation of the law, whereas at the present time the strengthening of the

law as compared to relaxing the provisions stood in the ratio of 336 to 100.

Each year since Zoning began to operate in New York the proportion of changes strengthening the law has materially increased over that of the preceding year, showing clearly not only official support of the Zoning plan, but that property owners are gradually favoring the strengthening of the Zoning requirements rather than their relaxation.

Other communities that are contemplating Zoning may well profit by the experience of New York and may feel quite safe in following New York's example in embarking upon a Zoning ordinance; for, if Zoning can be made a success, as it has been, in a great cosmopolitan city like New York with its nearly 6,000,000 population it is certain that it will be equally successful in smaller communities.

## MISTAKES TO AVOID IN ZONING

The address of Lawrence Veiller delivered at the National Convention of Real Estate Boards in Cleveland a year ago on "Mistakes To Avoid in Zoning" published as a pamphlet by the Detroit City Plan Commission has proved to be so popular that a second edition of 5,000 copies has recently been published by the Detroit Commission, the earlier edition having become exhausted.

## IS NEW YORK BECOMING UNLIVABLE?

New York's traffic problems have become so intense in recent years that many thoughtful persons have been giving very close study to the solution of present difficulties, and with an endeavor to anticipate at the same time the city's future development.

Recently at the initial meeting of the newly organized City Planning Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers, which held its first meeting in New York in January, with Nelson P. Lewis as Chairman and Charles B. Ball as Secretary, a thorough-going discussion was had of the problems of streets in our great cities with special reference to conditions in New York.

Among those who discussed the problem were Arthur S. Tuttle, Chief Engineer of the Board of Estimate and Appor-

tionment, Jacob L. Crane, Jr., of Chicago, and Harvey W. Corbett, the New York architect who has made a special study of this subject in connection with his studies as to the future of New York, made on behalf of a group of associated architects for the Committee on Plan of New York.

No student of city planning or of civic problems can be without admiration for the intelligent and painstaking studies which Mr. Corbett has made of New York's traffic problems, or of the ingenious solution which he offers for them through the scheme of three-decked streets, separating street traffic into three main classes of "foot, wheel and rail" and determining that wheel traffic must in future go upon the streets at the present street level, that all rail traffic must be put under ground and that foot traffic must be elevated up into the air.

After listening to this exposition of the New York of the future, one feels extremely depressed and wonders whether a city of that kind would really be worth living in. It is all very well when one looks at the charming architectural drawings of arcaded buildings with artistic Florentine lanterns hanging from the arches which Mr. Corbett shows, but when one realizes the kind of subways that our streets will be made into by such a scheme, and appreciates the lack of light and ventilation and the sanitary danger of such subways, and the constant fumes of gas and the terrific noise, one wonders whether one really would like to live in a city where the present subway is the prevailing condition of the city streets. Any one who travels much in the subway we think would promptly answer "No."

What Mr. Corbett's plan lacks, it seems to us, is a failure to realize that after it is adopted and the streets have become three-decked streets, the traffic problems will in all probability be just as great as they are today if not greater and that the difficulties of getting the traffic down the different levels will present new problems even greater than the problems which vex the city authorities today.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, Mr. Corbett's solutions of the present-day problems are thought-provocative and deserve high commendation.

The discussion at the Engineers' Building which was participated in, not only by Mr. Corbett, Mr. Crane and Mr.

Tuttle, but also by such students of the subject as Nelson P. Lewis, Harland Bartholomew, E. P. Goodrich, John P. Fox and Morris Knowles was one of the most interesting City Planning meetings that have been held in a long time and the new Department of the Society of Civil Engineers has certainly been launched under very happy auspices.

## ZONING AND HEALTH

Every Zoning practitioner and student of Zoning will be interested in the admirable and valuable 4-page pamphlet issued recently by the Cincinnati Public Health Federation in connection with the Zoning Ordinance now pending in that city.

After setting forth the conditions in Cincinnati with regard to the proportion of tenement dwellers in that community and the bad conditions that exist in the older tenements, pointing out that the only hope for the city is in the future, the Public Health Federation goes on to point out the close relation existing between bad housing conditions and health in Cincinnati, as already reported by the U. S. Public Health Service in a study of tuberculosis made some years ago, and from that proceeds to the relation between lack of fresh air and sunlight in the homes of the people and health conditions generally, summoning as witnesses the extraordinary results achieved in the English Garden Villages in reducing the death rate through proper surroundings.

After showing that greater congestion in the suburbs of Cincinnati is possible under the existing laws than even the conditions that exist in the overcrowded "Basin District" the Report sums up the value of Zoning from the Health point of view in the following pungent paragraphs:

1. Zoning will do more to make the future Cincinnati a city of healthful homes than any other measure proposed for many years.
2. Zoning will prevent future congestion by limiting the number of families to the acre.
3. It will guarantee the minimum of sunlight and ventilation for all houses and places of work.
4. It will encourage the one and two-family home.



5. It will prevent the city from being over-developed with huge flat buildings such as are now blighting many of the large cities in this country.

Having thus considered the relation of Zoning to the future homes of Cincinnati, the Report proceeds to deal with the effect of Zoning upon the places in which people work, pointing out the evils of unregulated high buildings and the necessity of light and ventilation in all structures in which human beings are to be found.

This document is a most admirable argument for Zoning and should prove invaluable to persons in other cities who are seeking Zoning Ordinances. It will undoubtedly prove an important factor in securing public support for the enactment of the Zoning Ordinance now pending in Cincinnati. Copies of the leaflet can be obtained from Bleecker Marquette, Secretary of the Public Health Federation, 25 East 9th Street, Cincinnati.

## ANOTHER KIND OF THREE-MILE LIMIT

While public attention has been concentrated to a considerable degree upon the three-mile limit at sea and its relation to the enforcement of the Volstead Law, there are other three-mile limits of equal importance to the future welfare of the country, especially that interesting zone around cities which ultimately will be part of the city but which at the present time is still a nebulous No-Man's Land and in which all kinds of city planning abuses are bound to crop up.

What can be said to be really the start of Regional Planning in this country is to be found in the attempts made some years ago by a few farsighted communities to control the territory immediately contiguous to their present boundaries. As we recall it, Syracuse, N. Y., was one of the first communities to attempt this. Eleven years ago it secured from the New York legislature by an act which became effective in April 1913, the power to require that all maps, plots, subdivisions, lot layouts and plans for extensions of streets and parks in the territory within a radius of three-miles beyond the city limits must be approved by the City Planning Commission of that city before such maps will be accepted by the County Clerk for recording.

Under this law the Commission was also given power to prepare a comprehensive plan of the city and lands lying within a distance of three miles of the city limits and to indicate on the maps the recommendations of the Commission for the future development of the streets, parks and playgrounds of that Area.

Acting under this power the Planning, Parks and Recreation Commission of Syracuse recently adopted a resolution requiring that all new subdivisions within the area in question must comply with certain regulations, the more important of which are the following:

The minimum width of lots is established at 50 feet; the minimum depth of lots at 125 feet; the maximum length of street blocks at 700 feet and the minimum width of streets at 60 feet.

In order that these regulations should not prove a strait-jacket, however, provision is made that they are subject to modification as may be necessary in exceptional cases.

The Far West has not been behind the East in grappling with this problem. Recently the Regional Planning Conference of Los Angeles County, California, prepared a most interesting Guide for the Preparation of Subdivisions of Land for the Use of Subdividers and Engineers. California similarly enjoys these powers within the three-mile limit, and the Guide for Subdividers lays down in both general terms and in specific rules the regulations that must govern for the subdivision of property in the district affected.

In the Los Angeles region, as in Syracuse, lot standards are set at 50 feet in width and 150 feet in depth and block lengths between 600 and 700 feet.

All students of city planning and Zoning problems will find it most profitable to obtain a copy of this interesting 28-page booklet entitled "Guide for the Preparation of Subdivisions of Land." Copies can be obtained by application to G. Gordon Whitnall, Secretary, Director of City Planning, Los Angeles, California.

This subject is to be discussed very fully in an all day session of the American City Planning Institute, to be held at 130 East 22nd Street, New York, on Saturday, March 1st, beginning at 10:30 o'clock, in Papers to be read by Edward M. Bassett and Robert Whitten.

## OPPOSITION TO ZONING IN PHILADELPHIA

Zoning in Philadelphia still seems to be at a standstill, and the real estate interests of that otherwise progressive community still seem to be strongly aligned against Zoning. Although professing their belief in the principle of Zoning, no ordinance that has thus far been proposed in the past five years has had the approval of the real estate interests of that city. This is unfortunate; for, probably no city needs Zoning more than Philadelphia; and, especially at the present time when buildings of excessive height are being erected in the narrow streets of the heart of the city—a situation which if it goes unchecked will ultimately work irreparable damage to the city and to real estate values.

It is unfortunate that the friends of Zoning and the real estate interests are not able to get together and evolve some plan upon which they can agree, as has been done in nearly every other progressive community.

## THE FEDERAL CITY

The movement launched last summer by the American Civic Association for the carrying out of the Washington City Plan, known as the Washington Committee on the Federal City, continues to gain headway and progress under the chairmanship of Frederic A. Delano who thus is rendering an inestimable service to the future welfare of two great cities—New York and Washington. For, Mr. Delano succeeded the late Charles D. Norton as Chairman of the Committee on Plan of New York and Environs.

Under the effective energizing force of J. Horace MacFarland and Miss Harlean James, the efficient executives of the American Civic Association, the movement for the Federal City is gaining support, not merely in the District of Columbia but throughout the United States. The Chairman of the Washington Committee has received more than 100 acceptances for service on that Committee, and sub-chairmen have been appointed for the following sub-committees:

Forest and Park Reservations, School Sites and Playgrounds, Housing and Reservations for Future Housing, Street, Highway and

In addition, over 50 committees have been organized throughout the country, chiefly in the Far West, and at the present time this movement is being extended by the organization of Field Committees in all parts of the country.

No work the American Civic Association has heretofore undertaken can compare in importance with the work that it is now doing toward making the District of Columbia what Washington and L'Enfant dreamed for it.

## CITY PLANNING IN THE UNITED STATES

Miss Theodora Kimball's annual Survey of City and Regional Planning in the United States has recently been published. Like its predecessors, it is an inspiring review of the happenings of the year in the great field of City Planning. As was to be expected, increasing evidence is disclosed in the latest survey of the field of the beginnings of Regional Planning in this country. Miss Kimball's survey, published in a pamphlet of 16-pages, gives the returns from nearly 250 cities and towns—an increase of 100 communities over a year ago. These embrace activities in the fields of City Planning, Zoning and Regional and County Planning in 42 states of the Union and the Territory of Hawaii.

Some of the striking facts disclosed by this survey are, that of the 68 cities in this country having a population of 100,000 or over, returns have been received in 1923 from practically all. Moreover, in every one of the 40 larger cities there is, or has been at work an *official* City Planning or Zoning Commission, and construction of public improvements is now proceeding in the great majority of these according to well considered plans.

Miss Kimball, after citing the figures recently published by the U. S. Department of Commerce showing the extent of the Zoning movement in this country, adds that when the residents of the municipalities now engaged in drafting Zoning ordinances, are added to these figures one-fourth of the total population of the country will be enjoying the protection afforded by Zoning laws.



This report reviews the notable achievements of the year in the field of City Planning and discusses progress in construction in various cities now under way, takes a view of the legislative situation with especial reference to Zoning and discusses at some length the development of the movement for metropolitan, county and Regional planning in this country.

In addition to these topics the report also discusses the subjects of Zoning, Land Subdivision and New Towns, Street System Improvements, Rapid Transit, Railroad Terminals and Port Development, Park Systems, Civic Centers and Civic Art with a look into the future.

As in the past, appended to the Report is a list of Plan Reports issued during the year under review, grouped alphabetically by cities. Students of city planning, housing and Zoning will find it impossible to get along without this important document. Copies can be obtained from Miss Kimball at Harvard University.

## THE CHICAGO REGIONAL PLAN

Following the meeting held in Chicago last March,\* a permanent organization to develop a comprehensive plan for the Chicago Region has been formed, known as the Chicago Regional Planning Association, with Dwight H. Perkins, the well known Chicago architect, as its President. In addition to Mr. Perkins as President, 5 Vice-Presidents have been named, one from each of the four Illinois counties immediately contiguous to Chicago and one from Lake County in Indiana, which adjoins Chicago on the south and east; 30 directors will constitute the Board of Directors, representing each of the communities directly involved.

The plan to be developed includes surveys of the territory to develop information necessary for the launching of the plan. These surveys will include Physical—such as mapping highways, railroads, electric lines, public parks, and fuel supplies; Industrial—covering factory development; Health and Housing—including sanitary district work; Educational—covering school demand; and Governmental—including an analysis of laws, particularly on taxation and kindred subjects.

The Committee has already made a tentative estimate of

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\* *Housing Betterment*, May, 1923, page 206.

Chicago's population in 1950, which they set at the figure of 6,000,000—a conservative estimate for Chicago. That the work of this Committee has been started none too soon can be fully realized when it is understood that the Area that they are studying includes a territory within a radius of 50 miles, in the belief that ultimately the Chicago Industrial District and the Chicago Suburban District will extend as far as Kenosha, Wisconsin on the north, to Michigan City, Indiana on the east and to Elgin, Aurora, and Kankakee to the west and south.

In working out its plans the newly formed Association will coöperate and coördinate its work with the governmental organizations already existing in this territory.

Thus Chicago makes a fine beginning on its great Regional problems, joining New York in its epoch-making studies.

## REGIONAL PLANNING IN CALIFORNIA

Regional Planning continues to make progress in California. In our last issue \* we reported the formation of the Regional Planning Commission of Los Angeles County. This Commission consisting of 5 members, according to its Director Mr. G. Gordon Whitnall, is now rapidly establishing itself in the machinery of government and is making excellent progress in coördinating the separate city planning activities throughout the region into a single programme of metropolitan building.

Mr. Whitnall has recently described the Los Angeles Region as a civic laboratory experimenting with Regional Planning under circumstances that produce almost immediate reactions which are as fascinating as a romance. He says:

Here, in and about Los Angeles, the component units are consistently increasing in population from 50% to 100% in a decade, municipal territorial expansion is rapidly filling out the metropolitan mosaic; in Los Angeles alone, 20 subdivisions are added on an average each week to the municipal mosaic; here during 1922 a new residence was completed every 26 minutes of the working day; industrial growth is exactly paralleling population increase; maritime commerce now holds the Pacific Coast record.

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\* *Housing Betterment*, November, 1923.

## REGIONAL PLANNING FOR MILWAUKEE

The latest metropolitan center to take up Regional Planning and consider the future development, not merely of the territory within its present boundaries, but of the future city, is the city of Milwaukee; which under the leadership of William H. Schuchardt, President of the Milwaukee Board of Public Land Commissioners, is developing plans for a Greater Milwaukee. The most recent important step taken in this direction is the provision made by the County Board of Supervisors in its 1924 budget for the sum of \$25,000 to be spent in the preparation of platting and Zoning data for all the land intervening between the city of Milwaukee and its various satellites and beyond. A staff of 8 engineers and surveyors is employed in making the preliminary field surveys.

An interesting pamphlet published by C. B. Whitnall, Secretary of the Milwaukee County Park Commission and Rural Planning Board, entitled: "By Regional Planning the Milwaukee of Tomorrow Conserves Nature's Attributes" has recently been published. Copies of this pamphlet can be obtained upon application to Mr. Whitnall.

## THE CITY OF THE FUTURE

One of the distinctive features of the recent highly successful National Housing Conference held at Philadelphia in December was the Regional Planning discussion in which Thomas Adams, the executive director of the Committee on Plan of New York and George McAneny, the Chairman of the New York Transit Commission, discussed what New York faces as the City of the Future.

All students of Regional Planning will find a perusal of these two important papers well worth while. They are to be found in a recently published volume of 408 pages entitled "Housing Problems in America" Vol. 9, issued by the National Housing Association obtainable at their offices, 105 East 22nd Street, price \$3 net.

Following this discussion, Clinton Rogers Woodruff, for many years a close student of civic affairs, has set forth in the *News Bulletin* of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, his ideas

of what the city of Philadelphia will be like 50 years from now.

Students of Regional Planning will also find it profitable to obtain Mr. Woodruff's article.

## ZONING A SUCCESS IN PITTSBURGH

While the Pittsburgh Zoning ordinance has only been in operation a little over 6 months it has already proved itself a very great success. Morris Knowles, the Chairman of the City Planning Commission and the chief person responsible for the enactment of the Zoning Ordinance and now acting as Chairman of the Board of Zoning Appeals, in an interesting article in the *Pittsburgh Post* on January first, sums up the workings of the ordinance in the five month period that had elapsed since its enactment in August up to the first of the year.

In this article Mr. Knowles points out that it was argued when the ordinance was pending that it would have a restrictive effect upon building operations. Therefore he very rightly shows the extent of building operations during the period in which the ordinance was in effect, contrasted with an exactly similar four months in the year previous; showing that there were more new building projects and more alterations projected under the Zoning Ordinance, than there were in the exactly same period at the same time of year a year ago—there having been 1581 new buildings projected from August to December in 1923 as compared with 1505 in the same period a year ago.

Considering also the subject from the point of view of the extent of appeals that have been addressed to the new Board of Zoning Appeals, Mr. Knowles points out that while the business of that Board has been heavy, imposing very heavy burdens upon its members, that that has been something that was to have been expected at the inception of the work; that necessarily many questions were bound to be presented to the Board of Appeals at the beginning of Zoning. Notwithstanding this fact, the appeals made to the Board in the period under review number less than 10% of the total number of permits issued.

Apparently the Pittsburgh Board of Appeals is following the example of the Chicago Board and actually making inspections in person of the property that is up before them for consideration, in this respect differing radically from the New York Board



of Appeals which has heretofore considered applications solely "on the record." We are frank to admit that the Chicago and Pittsburgh method commends itself heartily to us and we believe that it would be wise for the New York Board of Appeals to change its practice and follow the example of their neighbors of the Middle West. There is nothing like getting a first-hand knowledge of the actual conditions that one is to pass upon, in order to enable one to treat the application intelligently.

## ZONING IN CHICAGO

Charles B. Ball, the Chief of the Bureau of Sanitation of the Chicago Health Department has recently brought down to date his Report on Zoning in Chicago published as a Health Department document in 1922. In a new Report, supplementing the earlier one, Mr. Ball traces the Zoning movement in that city down to the early part of the year 1923.

This interesting 14 page pamphlet, fully illustrated by photographic cuts and graphs as well as maps is something that all students of Zoning will wish to obtain. Copies can be obtained from the Chicago Health Department by asking for Reprint Series No. 35.

## AVIATION AND CITY PLANNING

One of the first communities to consider the necessity of aviation landing fields in its relation to the development of the city plan is the city of Buffalo. *City-Facts* the interesting 4-page bulletin published monthly by the Buffalo City Planning Association contains in its January number a most interesting airplane view on which has been platted in white lines the proposed Municipal Landing Field concerning the acquisition of which a public hearing was recently held before the Buffalo City Council. This Landing Field comprises an area of approximately 300 acres and is considered to be advantageously located to serve its purposes and with relation to the other elements of the City Plan.

## REGIONAL PLANNING IN ENGLAND

Several new joint town planning committees are in process of formation—inaugural conferences having been successfully held—including the following regions: Bath and Bristol and district

(about 410,000 acres), Halifax and Huddersfield region (about 185,000 acres), Stoke-on-Trent and neighbors. The following have recently been established: The Midland Joint Town Planning Advisory Council, covering the region within from 15 to 20 miles of the City of Birmingham, and the Nottingham and District Joint Town Planning Committee, comprising 12 authorities and approximately 174,379 acres.

The forward policy adopted by the Manchester and District Joint Town Planning Advisory Committee in appointing a chief surveyor and staff to prepare a Regional Plan continues to gain adherents, and the local authorities who have combined in the committee now number nearly 90. The region has been divided into 9 groups, which has stimulated interest and given more individual scope, and planning and research go on apace.

The Leeds and Bradford Joint Town Planning Committee held its first meeting on July 10 last, when a sub-committee was appointed to recommend a programme. At the next meeting the proposed programme, which recommends action on similar lines to that adopted by the Manchester and District Committee, will be considered.

East Kent Joint Town Planning Committee.—The small group of authorities that first joined together for the purpose of regional planning has since been enlarged and now covers most of the coalfield and neighbouring seaside resorts. Representatives have also been co-opted from the Mineowners and Mineworkers Associations. At a meeting held at Canterbury on November 19, it was decided to appoint a specialist to prepare a Regional survey, in order that the prime factors of the situation and the problems to be solved, and their interrelation, may be made plain and the possibilities of solution indicated.

Rotherham Region Joint Town Planning Committee.—An excellent contour model of this region has been prepared, and on it Mr. W. R. Davidge has indicated the routes of the principal new roads and improvements that he proposes, after consultation with the local surveyors. On November 20 the joint committee considered these proposals, and agreed to the general principles, and the final report will now be printed in proof for ratification by the Committee.

Tees-side.—A number of Conferences, comprising representatives of the authorities on both sides of the Tees, have been held to consider the question of additional crossings of that river.

A report was presented by an expert committee comprising the Divisional Road Engineer of the Ministry of Transport and the county engineers of Durham and the North Riding. This report recommended an additional crossing by a swing or bascule bridge, just west of Middlesbrough. At the last Conference, held on November 21, the recommendation of the expert committee was adopted, and the Ministry of Transport were asked to suggest how the cost should be allocated. It was also resolved to ask the committee of experts to report on the possibilities of an additional crossing, east of Middlesbrough, nearer the mouth of the river. On the same day a meeting of the South Tees-side Joint Town Planning Committee was held in order to consider a report by the experts, Messrs. Patrick Abercrombie and S. D. Adshead, with a view to coordinating the sections that have been or are being put in hand of the arterial road that they recommended between Middlesbrough and Redcar. Part of the continuation of this road, beyond Redcar, has now been constructed and its point of entry into Saltburn was agreed.

Thames Valley Joint Town Planning Committee.—The interim report, comprising a regional survey, illustrated by maps and diagrams, of the experts, Messrs. Thomas Adams and Longstreth Thompson, has been approved and will be published. One of the diagrams illustrates in most graphic fashion the novel statistics as to movements of population between their homes and work-places, recently issued by the Census Authorities.

North Midlands.—A large tract of this industrial region is now covered by joint town planning committees, actually constituted or in process of formation, including the following: Manchester and district (some 500,000 acres), Leeds and Bradford and districts (about 250,000 acres), Halifax and Huddersfield and districts (about 185,000 acres), Rotherham region (63,540 acres), Doncaster region (108,160 acres), Mansfield region (about 100,000 acres), Nottingham region (some 174,000 acres). Farther west there are the Wirral peninsula and the Deeside Joint Town Planning Committees. The suggestion has been made, and is being considered, that a liaison committee should be formed in order to keep these great Regional committees in touch with each other.

## CANBERRA—A NEW CITY

It has always been the dream of town planners to have *carte blanche*—to be able to construct a new city from the ground up; but there have been few opportunities of this kind. True, L'Enfant and Washington had the thrill of laying out the plan of the new city of Washington, but with the exception possibly of those town planners who have been responsible for the development of the two Garden Cities of Letchworth and Welwyn, there have been few such opportunities in recent years.

Such an opportunity has at last presented itself in the development of the new federal capital of the Commonwealth of Australia known as Canberra. Some years ago American city planners became deeply interested in this project; for, they were invited to compete in the plans for this great undertaking and an American architect, Walter Burley Griffin of Chicago, was chosen as the successful projector of the winning design. Since that time little has been heard of the project, except rumors that have found their way from the Antipodes to this country, to the effect that the whole project was likely to be abandoned—and that nothing more would ever come of it than the architect's designs. It is perhaps not overstating the fact to say that it was believed from the very start that the project would never eventuate, because of the fact that it was what might be termed a "synthetic city," not a natural development, that the site chosen for this new capital was not a natural site, but a compromise determined upon so as to avoid having to decide between the rival claims of two great cities: viz., Sydney and Melbourne.

While recent dispatches from London indicate that a movement has been started to bring about the abandonment of Canberra as the federal capital, on which an expenditure has already been made reaching £1,500,000, further dispatches from Australia indicate that work upon the new capital is progressing, and that there is not much likelihood of its being abandoned.

Canberra is 70 miles from the sea and about 200 miles south of Sydney. It lies about half way between Sydney and Melbourne. The site of the new city is still almost virgin land, "bush" as they call it out there. It lies in a lovely land-



scape of rolling and sparsely wooded plain with clear air and wide outlook, encircled not too closely by rounded tree-clad hills. In the distance the blue slopes of Mount Stromble are visible.

Canberra, like Washington, is to be in territory completely under the control of the Federal Government. It will be as free from the interference of state politics as is the District of Columbia. It will be laid out as nearly like the city on the Potomac as the physical features of the site will permit. Much of the surveying has already been done. There will be the great "Circles" from which radiate broad avenues, tree-lined and spacious. The Parliament Building will surmount a hill, and from this national center will stretch wide streets upon which other public buildings will be erected. We shall see another Capitol Hill in another Washington in a new land that speaks the English tongue and embracing American ideas of business and administration.

There will be three great ornamental lakes; much space devoted to public parks and recreation grounds; a market; civic, educational and residential sections and so on.

The Australian builders have not been content to follow Washington blindly, but have profited by our mistakes. The most beautiful and fashionable residential district of Washington is far away from Capitol Hill. The Australian Parliament has prevented the possibility of such a development by holding all the land within several miles of the Capitol. No freehold title to land within the Federal area is possible. In this way the speculators in land values will not be able to repeat the Washington tragedy of grabbing all land near the Capitol and holding it at such prohibitive prices that home builders will go elsewhere.

Canberra is no dream city existing only on paper. It has begun to rise. The Duntroon Royal Military College was established there several years ago and is in full swing. This Federal college is the West Point of Australia. The Royal Australian Naval College has likewise been turning out thirty or forty finished midshipmen annually. This academy is situated on Jervis Bay, the port of the capital.

The Australians are setting about the erection of their new capital in no piecemeal fashion, but are planning it in a broad and far-sighted way. The needs of the future are considered

in everything done. There has already been completed, at the expense of several millions of dollars, the largest power house in all Australia. There is a water works sufficient for a city of two million people. It will be years before the city reaches that population, but Australia has set out to erect a city worthy of the great country that she will some day become.

The Prince of Wales laid the cornerstone of the Capitol building on his recent visit to Australia. The erection of the structure is going ahead so rapidly that it has been decided to hold the next Federal Parliament at Canberra rather than at Melbourne.

## RECENT ZONING PROGRESS

Notwithstanding the adverse action of the Courts that have been referred to, the Zoning movement continues to flourish and prosper. Cities, one after another, continue to join the list of cities in which zoning flourishes and new Zoning ordinances are enacted every week.

Among the cities and towns which have recently enacted Zoning Ordinances may be mentioned the following:

Monrovia, Cal., Pittsburg, Cal., Richmond, Cal., South Pasadena, Cal., Stockton, Cal., Venice, Cal., Pueblo, Colo., Bradentown, Fla., Lake Bluff (Revised), Ill., Lake Forest, Ill., Wheaton, Ill., Anderson, Ind., Muncie, Ind., Cambridge, Mass., Holyoke, Mass., Framingham, Mass., Longmeadow, Mass., Ann Arbor, Mich., Webster Groves, Mo., Tarrytown, N. Y., \*Union Corners, N. Y., Watertown, N. Y., \*Waverly, N. Y., \*Wilmont, N. Y., Madison, Ohio, Toledo, Ohio, Oklahoma City, Okla., Woonsocket, R. I., Petersburg (1922 Interim), Va., and Waukesha, Wis.

In New Jersey the following communities have adopted Zoning Ordinances:

Bayonne, Belleville, Bradley Beach, Clifton, Hawthorne, Merchantville, Ridgefield Park and West New York.

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\* *Unincorporated parts of Eastchester Town.*

## A CITY PLANNING TRIP TO THE COAST

An interesting opportunity confronts city planners and Zoning experts and practitioners in the holding of the National City Planning Conference this year at Los Angeles beginning on April seventh. Many of the members of the Conference in the east and middle west will avail themselves of the unusual chance to travel together for four or five days with full opportunity to thresh out problems in the professional field of city planning which they never have time enough to discuss in their various conferences.

A party will leave New York for Memphis Saturday, March 29th and will be joined on the way by planners and city officials from the central states. Charles F. Fisher, Robert Whitten, B. A. Haldeman, N. P. Lewis, George B. Ford, John Nolen and Charles W. Leavitt will be among the planners of the group; Alfred Bettman and Frank B. Williams will represent the law; Lawrence Veiller, housing and Zoning; among the city planning executives will be W. T. Jackson of Toledo, A. C. Godward of Minneapolis, Gardner S. Rogers of Milwaukee, George H. Herrold of St. Paul. The group will leave Memphis about 50 strong for New Orleans. The route from New Orleans will be either the Southern Pacific to San Diego or the Santa Fé to the Grand Canyon and then to Los Angeles. There will be a full day's stop at Memphis and New Orleans.

Memphis has adopted a city plan and has carried out several of its recommendations. New Orleans is preparing a city plan. Both cities offer interesting material for city planning study.

The Los Angeles programme will discuss among other subjects, the accomplishments in city planning during the last 15 years, various methods of street widening, harbor terminals and their approaches, the importance of citizens' committees in city planning, and regional planning in practice.

All who are interested in Zoning and city planning will find it worth while to get full details of the proposed city planning trip from Flavel Shurtleff, Secretary, National Conference on City Planning, 130 East 22nd Street, New York City.









# Housing Betterment

MAY, 1924

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## IN ENGLAND

### LABOR'S MASTERLY PROGRAMME

It is interesting that it should be reserved for a Labor Government to produce a constructive programme for the solution of England's housing problem that seems to hold within it all the elements of practical solution.

It is true that the present Labor Government in dealing with this problem has several distinct advantages over its predecessors in office. It has the benefit of experience—which always teaches more from its failures than from its successes—and it also has the very great advantage of being able to deal from the inside with the intricate element of Labor, on which many previous programmes have been wrecked.

With the advent of the new Government in February Premier Ramsay MacDonald announced the Government's intention of dealing resolutely with the housing problem and in no uncertain terms\*.

While no bill has as yet been introduced in Parliament embodying the Labor Government's housing programme, yet that programme has been recently quite fully enunciated in a striking document which, while not taking the form of a proposed legislative enactment, represents something far more important, namely, an agreement between the constituent elements of the Building Industry and the Government as to how this intricate problem shall be met.

The Government rightly has proceeded by first consulting

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\* See "Housing Betterment", February, 1924.

the Building Industry itself before attempting to formulate legislation. Realizing from the experience of recent Governments that the good will of both workman and employer, as well as of the manufacturer of building materials, was essential to the success of any housing programme, the Minister of Health John Wheatley shortly after accession to office, on February 6th called together representatives of the building industry to present to them the problems involved in meeting the housing shortage and providing a sufficient number of houses to meet the great need. A representative Committee was formed at that time composed of representatives of employers and operatives in all branches of the building trades. That Committee has recently rendered a Report which is little short of revolutionary in the method it proposes of dealing with this important question.

### THE BUILDING INDUSTRY REPORTS

The Report was published under date of April 10th and is entitled: "Report on the Present Position in the Building Industry with Regard to the Carrying Out of a Full Housing Programme Having Particular Reference to the Means of Providing an Adequate Supply of Labor and Materials" (Cmd. 2104, H. M. Stationery Office, London, 38 p. Price 9d.)

The Committee had as its chairman W. H. Nicholls, the President of the National Federation of Building Trade Employers; as its vice-chairman Thomas Barron, President of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives; and contained in addition, 18 representatives of the employers representing every branch of the Building Trades and 14 representatives of Labor—of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives. A member of the staff of the Ministry of Labor, B. H. Rogers, served as Secretary of the Committee.

Notwithstanding this large number of members and the diversity of the Committee's interests, it is significant that the Report was unanimously adopted and was signed by every member of the Committee. It augurs well for the success of the policy embodied in the Report.

The keynote to the whole programme is CONFIDENCE and GOOD WILL.



While the plan recommended is based upon a continuance of the policy of government subsidy for Housing, it also is based to a very great extent upon the policy of the previous Government in a return to private enterprise. In fact it may be said to neglect no element that will produce housing on a practical basis.

## A UNIQUE PLAN

The revolutionary character of the recommendations—and a scheme that is unique in governmental practice, not only in England but in any country—is the proposal that the Building Industry itself shall become responsible for the production of the houses needed by England, and that the responsibility for carrying out this programme shall rest upon the industry rather than upon the Government.

Naturally, the Government is an essential party to the scheme and must be relied upon to buttress with the force of legal authority the private interests that are seeking to carry out the plan, and provide such financial subsidy as may be necessary to make the production of houses possible.

Previous efforts at solving the housing problem in England since the War have become shipwrecked upon the rocks of shortage of labor, and mounting costs of building materials as operations increased—with profiteering on the part of both labor and manufacturer.

Both horns of the dilemma have been seized by those responsible for the new programme, and both dangers have been avoided. The Government, with the Building Industry at the helm, it would seem will be able to pilot its ship between the Scylla of Labor and the Charybdis of the employer and bring it into safe harbor.

## WHAT THE SCHEME IS

The scheme in essence is this:

1. Continuity on housing work will be guaranteed to the Building Trade for the next 15 years.
2. In that time it is proposed to erect 2,500,000 houses.
3. Prices of wages in the Building Trades are to be fixed by joint agreement, modified from time to time to

suit the cost of living but not so changed as to materially affect the cost of producing houses.

4. Cost of materials to be fixed by agreement with the industry, slightly modified from time to time owing to fluctuations in wages, but not so increased as to affect the cost of producing houses. Profiteering to be ruthlessly kept down.

5. Dilution of labor to be permitted by admitting apprentices, raising the age limit from 16 to 20, and increasing the number of apprentices.

6. The number of houses to be produced to be so adjusted to the other needs of the Building Industry as not to interfere with that industry or to attract men away from other kinds of work.

7. The maximum output of houses each year during the next 10 years is estimated as follows:

1925.....	90,000	1930.....	150,000
1926.....	100,000	1931.....	170,000
1927.....	110,000	1932.....	190,000
1928.....	120,000	1933.....	210,000
1929.....	135,000	1934.....	225,000

It is estimated that 40,000 houses are being produced at the present time. Therefore 50,000 additional houses are to be produced during the first year. Organized efforts to increase the number of workers in the building trades in every possible way will be carried out by the Industry. The increase of apprentices is to be definitely sought in the ratio of 1 to 3 skilled men employed. It is estimated that this will mean an increase of 35,000 apprentices over the present arrangement.

8. Local district committees are to be set up as well as a national joint committee to work the scheme, representing all interests concerned.

9. The Building Industry will produce the houses while the Government undertakes the provision of regular employment and moderate profits.

10. The extent of the state subsidy will be decided after negotiations with the local authorities. It is recommended that it be made an offense to pay either more or less than the agreed standards of monetary payment for labor or materials.

11. The transferring of labor from one district to another is to be avoided so far as practicable.

12. A statutory committee having certain powers to be established as part of the legislative proposals of the Government, which will have general oversight and direction of the scheme. This Committee to be, however, a committee not of the Government but of the Building Industry.

### ALL PHASES STUDIED

No conception, however, of the value of this Report can be obtained from any summary. The report deals authoritatively and practically with such questions as the shortage of skilled craftsmen and the methods of making good the depletion of the building industry. It presents authoritative figures showing the present state of labor-supply in the industry with the number employed in each of the main trades in December, 1913, October 1921 and in January 1924; and from this estimates the shortage in the various crafts at the present time, and reaches a conclusion as to the needs of the industry for additional craftsmen in each branch of the trade, to cope with the additional number of houses which the programme contemplates shall be built each year. It carefully bases such estimates upon a plan that will not interfere unduly with the present needs of the industry for other kinds of construction work, but will be a definite augmentation to the present activity in that industry.

The Report considers possible sources of variation of the cost of labor. It sets up a practical and detailed mechanism for managing the scheme; recognizing, however, that there are numerous details which will have to be worked out later and which will necessarily have to be embodied in a Parliamentary Act.

It canvasses with great thoroughness the question of shortage of building materials that will go into the production of

these houses and estimates accurately the need for each kind of materials that will be required to carry out the plan. Thus, for the provision of 50,000 houses, additional to the housing schemes already in progress—the number that it proposes shall be built during the first year of the scheme's operation—it shows that there will be needed 900,000,000 additional brick, 245,000 tons of cement and lime, 50,000 additional bathtubs and so on. While recognizing that there is not any considerable reserve supply of building materials in England, it does not anticipate any great difficulty in securing the necessary materials, provided the scheme which has been outlined is carried out.

The Report contains a schedule of the number of houses that are to be produced and completed on a given date during the year 1924 and in each subsequent year until 1934.

It considers with care, and from a practical point of view, methods of preventing unduly enhanced prices of materials, and of dealing with individual attempts to exploit the market. It considers the danger of demands of Labor upsetting the undertaking as to maintenance of current prices. It considers the distribution of housing schemes and their effect in facilitating or delaying the supply of materials, and also considers the need of freight cars and motor lorries and other means of transporting such materials. It also goes into questions of the control of materials, their allocation, the question of contracts to be made between employer and employe and numerous other detailed questions.

### SOME STRIKING STATEMENTS

The following striking statements contained in the Report seem to us worthy of quotation here:

With the certainty of a guaranteed programme for a number of years, there is no reason why, with the goodwill of all parties concerned, the housing needs of the country should not be successfully met.\*\*\*

Speaking of the previous efforts:

Another difficulty was the high cost of producing houses; that has been favorably modified to a large extent, but the present-day cost is such that workingclass houses cannot be produced on an economically satisfactory basis, such as would induce the invest-



ment of capital, unless a subsidy is provided by the State. Experience has shown that the subsidy granted under the 1923 act is insufficient to produce the class of workmen's cottages required, because their rentals are beyond the means of the class for which such cottages are most urgently needed.\*\*\*\*

The intimation which the Ministers gave at the outset that the Government was prepared to consider a programme extending over a period of years has provided the essential factor in enabling the Industry to contemplate the substantial additions to the skilled personnel of the Industry to be found hereinafter set out.\*\*\*

The Committee therefore considers that it is primarily necessary to restore the confidence of both Employers and Workmen in the future of the Industry, by providing the most stabilized conditions possible in regard to the demand for building work for a prolonged period.\*\*\*\*

The Committee has given careful consideration to cost and as a result of careful examination is of opinion that houses are being built today at the lowest possible cost.\*\*\*\*

It is understood that maximum costs will be agreed upon as part of the general housing scheme.\*\*\*\*

The Committee is strongly of opinion that in the case of contracts placed under the Government housing scheme, it should be made an offense to pay either more or less than the agreed standards for monetary payments.\*\*\*\*\*

The Committee has endeavored to set out the facts as fairly and unreservedly as possible, and to propose only those means for augmenting the supply of labor which appear to be capable of application by the collaboration with good will of the employers' and operatives' organizations concerned, with the Government, and the local authorities.\*\*\*\*

The Committee recommends that, for the purpose of dealing with outstanding attempts to increase prices, the Statutory Committee under the Housing Act should have adequate authority to examine carefully any suggested increase in the price of materials before such increase becomes operative. It is suggested, therefore, for consideration, that every proposed increase in prices should be submitted for the approval of the Statutory Committee prior to such increase being allowed to operate.\*\*\*\*

Scotland, which operates under somewhat different laws from England and Wales, was brought into these negotiations at the beginning and the Report in question was made jointly to the Minister of Health, the Minister of Labor and the Secretary for Scotland.

The Report indicates that the Building Industry in Scotland is ready to agree to the same conditions as the industry in England.

It therefore looks as if, with a united front, all parties in interest could in a short time set their hand to the solution of England's housing problem.

### THE MINISTER OF HEALTH SPEAKS

That the far reaching recommendations contained in this Report are likely to be followed in the near future by a legislative bill introduced on behalf of the Government is quite evident. Mr. Wheatley, the Minister of Health, as recently as April 23rd, speaking in Parliament of this Report said in substance the following:

The Government had received an extraordinarily valuable Report, and he desired to express the thanks of the Government to all those in the industry who spent so much time and skill in framing an industrial policy to meet the national needs. The main point to be noted in the Report was that the industry had come to the conclusion that, on the basis of a long-term programme of house-building, it would secure such an augmentation of the building labor of the country as would insure a production of houses which would go far to meet the essential needs of not only keeping pace with the normal demand, but of making good the present shortage and doing something effective to get rid of slum conditions. Without pledging themselves to the details of all the recommendations in the Report, the Government were prepared to accept the principle of a long programme, and were hopeful that this would command the support of all parties in the House. The representatives of the building industry authorized him to state that they would be prepared to attend non-party meetings of the House interested in housing and explain the Report and answer questions.

It had been a fixed principle of all recent legislation in aiming at a solution of the housing problem that the matter should be tackled on the basis of a partnership between the Government and the local authorities. Accordingly, as soon as the industry was in a position to report as to what was practicable, he summoned a conference of the local authorities' associations in Great Britain. He met their representatives on April 15, and explained to them the principles which it seemed necessary to observe. These he might sum up as follows:—The provision of houses in numbers sufficient to meet the needs he had described; the adoption of a long programme as a means of securing the necessary augmentation of the resources of the building industry; the provision of houses for letting at rents within the capacity of the workers. The local authorities undertook to form a Committee to consider these principles and to go into the necessary financial arrangements. He hoped to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible after the recess and to lay before the House the complete proposal.

## THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES CONSULTED

That the new policy is securing support in those quarters where support is essential is evidenced by the action taken by representatives of various Associations of the Local Authorities in England, Wales and Scotland after a conference with the Minister of Health and the Under Secretary of Health for Scotland. Those organizations included the Association of Municipal Corporations, the Urban District Councils Association, the Rural District Councils Association, and the Corporation of Royal Scottish Boroughs. Representatives of the London County Council were also present.

At this meeting the Minister made a full statement of the housing question and the steps taken by the Government up to the present time in the preparation of their housing policy.

Subsequently the representatives of the local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland considered the Minister's statement and informed him that they had agreed on the following Resolution :

That, having heard the statement of the Minister, this Conference, representing the Association of Municipal Corporations, the Urban Districts Councils Association, the Rural District Councils Association, and the London County Council, appoint a Committee to examine the points raised in the Minister's speech and the proposals contained in the Report of the National House Building Committee and to report thereon to this Conference and also to consider and report what State subsidy is necessary to enable local authorities to proceed with the erection of houses for the working classes.

## HOW IT STRIKES AN OBSERVER

A close student of housing affairs in England commenting on the proposed policy of the present Government has the following to say :

The Report submitted to the Minister of Health by the Joint Committee of Employers and Employes in the Building Trade is one of the most important documents of recent times.

To my mind the scheme is certainly conceived on bold lines. Let us leave aside the question of subsidies and all those semi-political questions that divide people and consider it as a whole. The first thing that is common ground is that it will be impossible to get sufficient houses built to remedy the shortage unless the

industry is organized as a whole—men, employers, building material manufacturers, etc. To do this there must be more men and materials; this involves an agreed long-period programme. Instead of attempting to foist something on to the industry the Minister has induced the industry to suggest a method of their own. IN SHORT, UNREGULATED INDIVIDUAL ACTION HAS BEEN AGREED UPON AS UNSATISFACTORY, BUREAUCRATIC STATE ACTION HAS NOT BEEN CONSIDERED WORTH TRYING, BUT VOLUNTARY INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION WITH STATE CO-OPERATION AND SUPPORT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED. I think that in that sentence we have the kernel of the whole thing and that once that is agreed upon the details should follow.

To my mind there is just one great difficulty, viz: the possibility of the industry being in too powerful a position for the community. The only consolation we have is that it is bound to be more or less in that position if the State helps housing on a large scale and that the present suggestions seem to offer more safeguards than the Addison scheme. Nevertheless I do feel chary about setting up such great national syndicates. The one comfort we have is that "in our rough island story" we have managed to get on with but little big-scale graft and that the light of public opinion is bound to beat fairly fiercely upon the working of the scheme.

In any case no Government can last in this country that does not attempt to tackle the housing problem. Public opinion is very strong on the question and "the mother of parliaments" is particularly responsive to public opinion. Hence the great interest in the affair.

### THE ATTITUDE OF THE TRADE JOURNALS

That the new scheme is likely to commend itself to the British public is evidenced by the way it has been received by the technical journals most vitally interested, notably *The Builder* and *The Architects' Journal*. Commenting on the Report editorially, *The Builder* says:

It relies upon coöperation, sensible administration and goodwill to provide the necessary machinery for what at first is only to be a slightly accelerated output. \*\*\*\*\* Today the paramount necessity is confidence, and this can only be attained through coöperation and good will within the industry.

It is gratifying to find that the three internal parties—employers, operatives and manufacturers—have abandoned their own peculiar catchwords and sunk their differences to an extent sufficient to produce a Report which has not only been arrived at unanimously, but is also essentially practical. This unanimity is of greater sig-



nificance to the building trade than any event of recent years.\*\*\*\*

Mr. Wheatley deserves our thanks and congratulations for having brought together the parties which have framed this Report, which we welcome, though with reservations; his task has, however, only begun. In so far as he can succeed in making the proposals effective it would probably result in a housing solution, but at a cost and under conditions similar to those we were only too familiar with under the Addison regime. If his proposals are carried into effect there would appear to be little hope for private enterprise of the past in housing.

*The Architects' Journal*, speaking of the Report says:

It is a notable document, because it analyzes with knowledge of the Industry all aspects of the problem as they present themselves to builders and their operatives, as well as to the builders' merchants responsible for the supply of material.

## THE GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL PROPOSALS

Cables just received from London indicate the publication of a "White Paper" on May 16th giving the details of the Government's Housing Programme which has been characterized by the opponents of the scheme as the "biggest socialistic experiment in world history".

The plan as announced—complete details had not been received at time of going to press—is to provide an annual subsidy of £13 10s. (about \$60) on every house built to be rented during the next 40 years. Of this amount the Federal Government will pay out of the national treasury £9, and the Local Authorities will pay the balance, or £4 10s.

This is a 50% increase in the amount of annual subsidy from the Central Government over the amount provided in the 1923 Act under the Stanley Baldwin Administration.

The plan contemplates the building of 2,500,000 houses through a 40-year period. On this basis Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who was the present Minister of Health's immediate predecessor in office, has stated that the cost of the proposal to the taxpayers of Great Britain will be in the neighborhood of £600,000,000 (over \$2,500,000,000).

Kingsley Wood, gives the cost at £1,300,000,000 (about \$6,000,-

Another estimate furnished by another Conservative, Sir 000,000), with interest for 40 years.

It is stated that these proposals will meet determined opposition in Parliament, both from the Conservatives and Liberals. If that be true, then it would seem as if the present Labor Government would fall, as this is surely a question of governmental policy involving a question of confidence. In such cases it has been the uniform practice of the Government when defeated to resign and "go to the people".

What will happen under these circumstances and if Housing is made the chief issue in a new election is hard to say. In the opinion of many competent observers it would not be surprising to find the country standing solidly behind the Labor Government on such an issue. It is stated that according to impartial estimates, there are 3,000,000 people in the country having inadequate shelter and 10,000,000 who live under conditions which are very far from proper.

So far as one can judge at this distance, and without fuller details, it would seem as if the Labor Government had carefully selected an issue with which it wished to go to the people and which it hopes will restore it to power with such a majority as to make their tenure of office more secure than their present shaky and unsatisfactory one.

## THE MINISTER OF HEALTH ON THE NEED

Speaking at the opening of the Building Trades' Exhibition at Olympia recently the Minister of Health, John Wheatley, had the following to say with reference to the housing situation in England:

Nearly three-quarters of the population of the country reside in small dwelling-houses. For one reason or another, mainly because of comparative poverty and industrial insecurity, most of these people could not afford to own the house they occupied and had to depend for housing accommodation on the supply of houses at weekly or monthly or yearly rents. There was at the moment a serious shortage of these houses. He would not go into the figures of the shortage or produce any evidence in support to-day. It was obvious to the man in the street, as well as to the man in the building industry. The unfortunate part of it was that things were not getting any better.

In order to prevent the shortage growing they required an annual output of at least 100,000 of these houses. That number was required

to meet the natural depreciation of property and the expansion in the population. And they were not getting that number; and in so far as they were not getting that number of houses their position was getting worse year by year.

They were drifting as the result of that into conditions under which it was quite impossible to produce or maintain an efficient industrial population; and without an efficient industrial population it would be impossible in the future for Great Britain to remain great in the competition which it would have to meet amongst the industrial nations of the world.

That made it a matter of the most urgent national importance that they should find a way, and find it speedily, out of their housing difficulties.

Speaking of the shortage of materials and labor he added :

He did not see any great difficulty about it. He did not see why the nation which wanted houses should not be able to organize its industry in such a way that instead of paying people for registering at Labor Exchanges they should pay them wages for producing and delivering the goods of which the nation was so much in need. He would appeal also to manufacturers, and not to them alone, to consider how the methods of production could be improved to the greatest extent so as to insure that the increasing demand for building materials would not result in an increase in the prices of those materials. That was also very essential.

There was a limit to the rent which the class of people for whom they wanted houses could afford to pay; and there was a limit to the extent to which they could hope the taxpayers of the country would contribute in subsidy. And so it was clearly the duty of all of them to see that the problem was met, so far as possible, by not merely expressions of good will but by cooperation in industry, such as improvement in their methods of production, and thus for a given output of skill and capital they would be able to get an ever-increasing result.

## PROGRESS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSING SCHEMES IN ENGLAND

Replying to a Parliamentary question Mr. Wheatley, the Minister of Health stated recently that under the 1923 Housing Act, out of a total of 41,060 houses for which Government aid had been granted, 40,141 had received a lump sum subsidy; 721 had received assistance by payment to the people who paid the rates (taxes) and in 198 cases assistance was given to Building Societies. In the case of Public Utility Societies, schemes had been authorized in respect of 5,681 houses, of

which contracts had been let for 3,601 and 529 of the houses had been actually completed.

In addition, loans had been sanctioned to local authorities in 104 cases involving a total sum of £1,320,429, and under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act in 81 cases involving £1,469,000. He added that the Ministry had received no proposals in regard to the conversion of flats into small dwellings.

Discussing the general efficacy of the 1923 Housing Act as an instrument for the solution of the housing problem, the Minister of Health stated that the latest figures showed that the Ministry had given to local authorities authorization for 40,198 houses, and to private enterprise for 76,927 houses, making a total of 117,125.

For these, contracts had been let to the number of 66,698, or just about half the number for which authorization had been granted.

At the beginning of March there were under actual construction 23,498 houses, and 6,148 houses had been actually completed at that time.

He was of the opinion that there had been no lessening of the enthusiasm of the local authorities or of private enterprise in the building of houses and added that there was a misapprehension as to the attitude of Labor on this subject, that Labor did not propose to interfere with private enterprise in the building of houses or in the manufacture of building materials.

## IN SCOTLAND

The Under Secretary of Health for Scotland at the same time stated that the Scottish Board of Health had approved under the 1923 Act the erection by Local Authorities of 6,820 houses; for 1,943 of which contracts had been accepted, that 611 houses were under construction and 8 had been actually completed.

With regard to private enterprise in Scotland the number of houses for which certificates had been issued was 1779; 865 were under construction and 29 had been completed.

## COST OF HOUSING IN ENGLAND

Official figures furnished by the Ministry of Health recently state that during the month of January the average prices of



non-parlor and parlor houses included in contracts let and reported by local authorities were £384 and £445, respectively. These prices were exclusive of the cost of land, roads and sewers. They represent an increase in price over the cost in October, last, but are under the figures of December. They are in refreshing contrast to the prices of £1100 per house which prevailed during the height of the Addison regime.

## GOVERNMENT HOUSES ON EXHIBITION

Visitors to the great World's Fair to be held in London this summer, known as the British Empire Exhibition, at Wembley on the outskirts of London, by means of a most attractive exhibit will have an opportunity of studying the types of houses which are being produced throughout England under the Government Subsidy Scheme.

The Ministry of Health has recently announced that it will show in such an exhibit photographs and plans illustrating the site plan or layout of improved housing estates as well as the house plan or design for the houses. The examples have been selected from different parts of the country so as to show the difference in design according to local conditions and materials available.

Two large town planning models will be found side by side, one representing a common type of industrial town devoid of intelligent arrangement, inconvenient and smoke-blackened; and the other showing what can be accomplished by foresight and skilled design upon the same site.

There will also be a set of the maps required for a town-planning scheme and a perspective plan showing what Margate (a famous resort) is expected to look like at some future date.

A map is also to be shown indicating the Regions in England and Wales where town planning schemes are being carried out. Exhibits will also deal with the question of smoke prevention.

## THE ASTOR HOUSING FUND FOR PLYMOUTH

Lady Astor, M. P., has written to the Mayor of Plymouth recently defining the amended offer which she and Lord Astor are making to the town of gifts to form a Housing Trust.

She offers the sum of £10,000 and Lord Astor an equal amount. The Town Council is to purchase, if necessary, the land considered most suitable for building—a site is suggested—and is to contribute up to £50 per house for the construction of roads, &c.; it is also to pay the Government-subsidy to the trust.

The Housing and Town Planning Council and the Garden Cities Association have offered help in preparing an outline for the development of the scheme, and numerous offers of help have been received from architects, builders and others. After the scheme is started, it is proposed to appoint governors to administer the fund, two of these being the Mayor and the Chairman of the Housing Committee.

### ZONING IN ENGLAND

The Zoning movement in England continues to gain ground. There is much greater discussion of the subject of Zoning and the use of the term than there was a year ago and through all parts of England there is a general stirring of interest in the subject, as distinguished from the methods that have been employed in the past under the Town Planning Act.

A recent indication of this interest has not only been the discussions of Zoning which Mr. Unwin has been active in, and the various papers that have been read by both him and Mr. I. G. Gibbon of the Ministry of Health, but now comes the news that the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce has appointed a Special Committee with authority to communicate with the Minister of Health and other bodies offering the Chamber's assistance in the various proposed schemes for Town Planning which are being undertaken in London districts.

The *London Society* has for some time past taken the lead in this movement and is still actively educating the people of London to a realization of the necessity for an intelligent Zoning of that great metropolis. They are at present engaged on a survey of the existing conditions over certain areas, while the London County Council is surveying other portions, and the Royal Institute of British Architects have made exhaustive plans of a large portion of the Metropolitan District.

Sir Aston Webb, England's distinguished architect, in a lecture on the "Future Development of London" recently,

pointed out that the first and essential requirement was a complete survey of present conditions showing in various colors public buildings, markets, railway stations, parks and playgrounds, &c.

On this occasion he discussed the means of providing parks, of reserving landing places for aircraft, of restricting areas for definite classes of buildings and of removing factories farther out into the country, and expressed his disapproval of the suggestion that higher buildings should be erected and insisted that due importance should be given to the artistic side of any scheme.

Dr. I. G. Gibbon, C.B.E., Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Health, also in a lecture on "Town Planning" at the London School of Economics has recently laid stress upon the importance of an intelligent study of London. He said the time was ripe for the preparation of a plan for London and that improvements and developments which were being discussed and for which vast sums of money were to be expended, ought to proceed only on a plan after a thorough inquiry. He said this applied to the proposed St. Paul's Bridge, Charing Cross Bridge and Lambeth Bridge; but at the moment it seemed it was no one's business.

Dr. Gibbon suggested the appointment of a general Committee representing all the various interests. Under that Committee he thought there should be a small executive—a board on which business should be strongly represented—to supervise and direct the work necessary for a plan.

Thus, apparently, London is gradually reaching the point of view of New York and working toward the development of a scheme for the study of its municipal problems—and especially its problems of future development—along very much the same lines that the Committee on Regional Plan of New York has so effectively developed.

#### OXFORD TO BE ZONED

Of all the places in the world that one delights to think of as harmonious and restful and a thing of beauty, the city of Oxford easily takes first place in most men's minds.

It is interesting therefore to find that the public authorities in that city are keenly alert to the necessity of developing a proper Town Planning scheme for the future development of

Oxford and are considering the Zoning of the city as vitally essential to such a scheme.

The Master of Balliol, recently appeared at a hearing before the City Council on this question and said that the scheme had the general goodwill and interest of the University. He added, however, that the University took no special part in the Proceedings, as such, because of the fact that members wished to be considered rather as citizens than in a special category, as they knew the whole of the residents of Oxford were equally interested in the preservation of the beauty of their city. The University buildings were the most beautiful thing they had left in England and every one desired to preserve them. He was also in general sympathy with the scheme proposed and added that it was evident that the principle of Zoning—applying particular uses to particular areas—was of great importance to the University.

## TOWN PLANNING EXHIBITIONS IN ENGLAND

Three interesting Town Planning Exhibitions and attendant Conferences have been held in London. One of these was held this winter at Olympia in connection with the great annual Building Show which is held in those vast spaces.

From the accounts which have come to us it is quite evident that this Exhibition was unusually well worth while and contained a number of most valuable and distinctive features. Students of town planning will be very much interested in reading an account of it and of the various interesting models and other exhibits that were there displayed written by W. R. Davidge, the well-known British Town Planner, and published in *The Builder*, issue of December 7th last.

In Mr. Davidge's opinion the Exhibition was one of the best gotten together in recent years and the material collected was for the most part of an essentially practical character.

The chief features of the Exhibition were the astoundingly clever models showing a system of arterial roads and road widening contemplated in England. The *pièce de résistance* of the whole Exhibition was generally considered to be the great floor model, prepared by Professor Adshead and his students, showing one-eleventh the full size the Brentford By-pass Road—the Great West Road.



Another interesting feature was a diagram prepared under the direction of George L. Pepler, Town Planner of the Ministry of Health, showing the extent of Town Planning Schemes and Regional Planning Schemes throughout the country. This indicated what widely varied towns and regions are at present hard at work on town planning. The exhibit was not, however, confined only to the British Isles; for, such far flung outposts of Britain's territory as Lucknow and Bombay made an exhibit.

Probably as interesting a feature of the exhibit as any of the exhibits themselves was the fact that the business interests responsible for organizing the Commercial Motor and Roads Exhibition should have felt it important to have devoted so great a space as was given up to town planning exhibits. It augurs well for the success of the town planning movement in England to have a commercial interest of this kind realize so keenly the importance and value of the movement.

### THE EXHIBITION AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

A more recent Exhibition but an equally valuable and striking one is the exhibition that opened at University College in April. The object of this Exhibition was to illustrate the work of past and present students of the Department of Town Planning. For 10 years, under the able guidance of Professor S. D. Adshead, the Department has been at work steadily and unostentatiously training students, both architects and engineers, to qualify for any work that they may have to carry out under the Housing and Town Planning Act; and many such are now employed in this capacity in different parts of the country.

The Exhibition is roughly divided into sections comprising Civic Surveys, Town Improvement Schemes, Town Development Schemes, Reconstruction of Slum Areas, Estate Development Schemes, and work executed by past students.

It is quite evident from the description of the various exhibits that the whole Exhibition was a comprehensive one and embraced practically every phase of comprehensive town planning.

In connection with the Exhibition a series of Conferences have been held in which some of the fundamental principles of town planning have been discussed. On one day Raymond

Unwin spoke on "Zoning Requirements of Town-Planning Schemes"; on another George L. Pepler on "The Technique of Preparing Maps in Connection with Town Planning Schemes"; on another Dr. I. G. Gibbon, C.B.E., Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Health, spoke on "Town Planning Schemes in Relation to their Regional Development". And at still another session Topham Forrest, the Architect of the London County Council spoke on "Architectural Interests Involved in the Making of Town Planning Schemes".

#### AT WEMBLEY

The third great Exhibition of Town Planning in England is that which opened at Wembley—the British Empire Exhibition—beginning on April 23rd and continuing until May 17th. At this great World's Fair which has opened recently and which it is expected will be attended during the summer by "the world and his wife", a special section of the Exhibition has been given up to a comprehensive town planning exhibit.

In connection with it a series of meetings organized by the Town Planning Institute were held, beginning on May 5th and lasting till May 9th. Practically all of the leading town planners in England have participated in these meetings, and practically every phase of the subject was discussed. A paper on Town Planning in Canada was contributed by Thomas Adams, and among the others taking part were the Minister of Health John Wheatley, The Right Hon. Sir Joseph Cook, High Commissioner for Australia, W. R. Davidge, H. V. Lanchester, Professor Patrick Abercrombie, George L. Pepler, Sir Aston Webb, Raymond Unwin, Professor S. D. Adshead, Hon. Neville Chamberlain and many others.

#### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT AMSTERDAM, HOLLAND

JULY 2-9

The Programme of the International Town Planning Conference, referred to in our last issue, which is to be held at Amsterdam, Holland, July 2nd to 9th, has recently been received. It comprises two main subjects: Regional Planning

and Parks, Park Systems and Recreation. Regional Planning will be discussed in the following papers by the following persons:

THE MODERN TOWN. By J. Granpré Molière, C. E., Vice-President of the Dutch Town Planning Council.

THE NEED FOR A REGIONAL PLAN. By Raymond Unwin, Chief Housing Architect to the British Ministry of Health.

THE PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF A REGION. By Patrick Abercrombie, Professor of Civic Design, University of Liverpool.

THE REGIONAL PLAN—

- (a) GENERAL FEATURES. By Leon Jaussely, Chief Architect to the French Government at the School of Fine Arts, Paris.
- (b) LOCATION OF COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND HOUSING AREAS. By Thomas Adams, Director of Plan of New York and Environs.
- (c) DRAINAGE. By Francois Sentenac, Chief Engineer of Roads and Bridges, and of the Seine Conservancy, Paris.
- (d) OPEN SPACES. By Dr. F. Schumacher, Town Planning and Housing Architect to the City of Hamburg.
- (e) TRANSPORTATION. By R. Verwilghen, Director of the Department for the Devastated Regions, Belgian Ministry of the Interior.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SATELLITE TOWNS IN THE REGIONAL PLAN. By C. B. Purdom, Finance Director, Welwyn Garden City.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROBLEMS IN CONNECTION WITH THE REGIONAL PLAN. By Dr. van Poelje, Chief of The Hague Municipal Education Department, formerly Town Clerk of Helder.

SPECIAL PAPERS ON REGIONAL SCHEMES:

1. NEW YORK. By Flavel Shurtleff, Field Secretary of Plan of New York and its Environs.
2. THE RUHR DISTRICT. By Dr. Schmidt, C. E. Director of Regional Development in the Ruhr District.
3. REGIONAL PLANS FOR HOLLAND. By P. Bakker Schut, C. E. Director of Municipal Town Planning and Housing Department of The Hague.

PARKS, PARK SYSTEMS AND RECREATION will be discussed in papers presented by:

H. V. Hubbard, Professor of Landscape Architect, Harvard University, U. S. A.

Jacques Gréber, Professor at the Paris School of Higher Civics.  
H. Cleyndert Azn, Dutch Society for the Preservation of Natural Beauty Spots.

The sessions of the Conference will be held at The University Hall, Amsterdam, and will be on July 2nd, 3rd and 4th.

The annual meeting of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation will be held on the afternoon of July 2nd, and an informal reception for the delegates and guests will be held on that evening. After the formal sessions are completed a study tour of Amsterdam and other important cities in Holland is contemplated, Saturday, July 5th, being devoted to Amsterdam itself; Sunday, to Amsterdam's suburbs and neighboring towns and it is hoped to include Utrecht.

The delegates will leave in the evening for The Hague. On Monday, July 7th, a study tour of The Hague will be made and on the next day a visit to Rotterdam. A meeting will be held in Rotterdam. Wednesday, July 9th, will be devoted to further tours of Rotterdam and Delft.

The fee for delegates is £1. Persons desiring to attend the Conference will find it desirable to promptly communicate their intention to Mr. H. Chapman, Organizing Secretary, International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation, 3 Gray's Inn Place, London, W. C. 1, England.

Mr. Chapman's staff will be glad to arrange for hotel accommodations, if desired, both at Amsterdam and The Hague. The prices including bedroom and breakfast per person at Amsterdam, range from 3.50 to 6.50 florins, and at The Hague from 3.25 to 4.50 florins.

All persons in America who are planning to be abroad at this time of year and who are interested in the important subjects of Town Planning, Regional Planning and the Development of Parks, Park Systems and Recreational Facilities, will find it advantageous to attend this Conference. Students of Housing will also find it profitable in the study tours that are to be made a part of the Conference.



## THE STRASBOURG INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Among the recommendations of the recent International Municipal Congress held at Strasbourg are the following:

That international expositions hereafter should reserve space for town-planning, Garden Village and other municipal exhibits.

That the heights of buildings should be proportional to the outlook—width of open space.

That the French compulsory town planning law (*14, March 1919*) should be extended to the colonies; and that penalties should be provided for failure to comply with its provisions. This matter of penalties touches what has been the weakest point in the administration of the law; although local town-planning boards, are required by law to be appointed, nothing happens if such appointments are not made.

That the emergency housing measures enacted since the war—especially those dealing with rent restriction—should be repealed as soon as possible.

## IN PARIS

The Public Housing Office of the City of Paris, which has erected more than 7,500 apartments for working people since the war—quite distinct from the 6,000 cottages in the suburbs built by the Department of the Seine—has a new project; this time for small-salaried, middle-class families. Four groups of 7-story apartment houses with baths, elevators and central heat, are to be built at the gates of Menilmontant, Villiers, St.-Cloud and Orleans. Work was to start in February.

Recent dispatches from Paris indicate that that city is facing the same difficulties in high cost of construction that are found in most American cities—and in fact are universal the world over. The Government had developed a scheme for erecting apartment buildings in which it was hoped that the lodgings could be furnished at a moderate rental; but even with the advantages offered by the city the few contractors who bought plots of city ground for the purpose have discovered that they could not build at this time so as to undercut the house owners who are currently accused of extortionate rents. The lowest rate that the builders of these houses with

cheap land could offer for a 2-room apartment was equivalent to the rental demanded for 3-room apartments as a rule in the older buildings. The contractors say that high wages and the low output of labor make it impossible to build new apartments for moderate rentals.

Paris, too, is preparing to deal with its slums. The Municipal Council recently voted 21 million francs for the demolition of insanitary houses and the erection of modern dwellings in their place.

## LA RENAISSANCE DES CITÉS

The report of this French society for the year 1923 shows it in process of transferring its activity from the better planning of communities in the Devastated Regions to a permanent advisory bureau on town planning for the whole of France. The somewhat vague compulsory town-planning law offers it a wide field of usefulness.

Its project for the rebuilding of Pinon as a model village has been abandoned, owing, partly to the impossibility of harmonizing the views of the inhabitants. The sum of 120,000 francs donated toward the project, will be used to build the village a town hall and a school.

Chauny and Coucy-le-Chateau continue to be objects of especial interest. Funds for rebuilding the latter place have been raised by the citizens of the old Provençale city of Carcassonne, who "adopted" it.

Rheims is regarded as a lost sheep, but efforts are still being made to save the immediate neighborhood of the Cathedral. Americans may remember that the plan originally adopted for the rebuilding of Rheims was the work of George B. Ford, who was associated at that time with *La Renaissance des Cités*. Due to the insistence of property owners on maintaining their individual sites in precisely the old form, very little has survived of the Ford plan.

As already announced in *Housing Betterment*, *La Renaissance des Cités* is planning a garden suburb near Paris for artists, actors, authors and other "intellectuals" of moderate means, to be called the Village Sarah-Bernhardt. American admirers of the divine Sarah, we are informed, are to be given an opportunity to contribute to the realization of the projected memorial.

## IN IRELAND

It is reported that the new Free State government of Ireland will advance \$1,500,000 as a subsidy to relieve the housing shortage. The purpose of this is to bring down the price of a 3-room house to \$1,300, of a 4-room house to \$1,800 and of a 5-room house to \$2,300.

## IN BELGIUM

The Government budget for 1924 shows that Belgium intends to keep on building subsidized workingmen's houses, even though funds are scarce.

For loans to Housing Societies at 2%, 100 million francs are appropriated. To this the General Savings Bank will add 50 million.

A couple of years ago, the Government offered premiums, not to exceed 3000 francs, or one fifth the cost of the house, to the first 10,000 working people who should build homes for themselves of approved standards. About 1500 persons received the premium in 1923, and 4000 will receive it this year. Ten million francs are appropriated. Five and a half million francs additional are set aside for other housing purposes.

### A BUILDING LOAN SOCIETY FOR BRUSSELS

A Society has been planned to function under the supervision of the General Savings Bank of Brussels, which will supply additional credit to those purchasing homes from the Housing Societies. Cash must be paid in order to set the money to work again at building new houses. The Government gives a premium of not-to-exceed 20%. The General Savings Bank lends a maximum of 70%. The purchaser must furnish the rest. But sometimes he can't quite do it. Hence the need of a lending society for small second mortgages.

## THE VALUE OF PLANTING

Under the title of "Cities of Verdure" a writer in the Belgian magazine *L'Habitations à Bon Marché* stresses the importance of green trees and grass in the laying out of a Garden Suburb. He points out that they contribute restfulness, health-

fulness and beauty and should be considered as part of the architectural design. Rightly used, he states that they take the place of much architectural ornament. The advantage of planting fruit trees around a house is emphasized. In connection with this discussion, attention is called to the fact that the Department of Agriculture of Belgium gives advice on request as to the best trees, shrubs, hedges and flowers to plant in a specified soil and with a given exposure.

A bill has been presented by the Ministry to the Belgian Parliament to amend the civil code in such way as to permit the individual ownership of an apartment and the joint ownership of the halls and other public parts of a building. While this form of ownership is an old story in France, it is apparently new in Belgium.

### GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES HOME OWNERSHIP IN BELGIUM

In Belgium the Government has recently issued several Royal Decrees (those of February 12 and 13, 1924) amending earlier ones which provide subsidies ("premiums") to stimulate the building or purchase of small dwellings. The amendments were for the most part in the direction of liberalizing the grants, but in a few instances restrictions were inserted to guard against abuses.

In order to understand the significance of these decrees, a little retrospect is necessary. Belgium is pre-eminently a nation of home-owners, and it has been the government's policy, except when the Socialist party has been in control, to encourage home-ownership among the working classes in every possible way. Under the housing law of 1889 more than 86,000 working-class families have acquired homes with the aid of 25-year loans from the General Savings Bank. The loans were made on a no-profit basis, but no subsidy was involved.

The needs of renters, backed by the government-action group, resulted in a new housing policy approved by Parliament early in 1914, but not put into operation until after the war. By that time the spectacular rise in building costs to six times those of 1914 made it necessary to add an element of subsidy. Even then, Belgium did not undertake municipal housing on the British, Dutch or German model, but evolved a character-



istic mixture of private effort and public control. The so-called *Société Nationale des Habitations et Logements à Bon Marché* created by the act of 1919, is simply a government Commission presiding over the execution of the work. The society itself builds no houses, but stimulates, guides and controls local housing Societies; which, again, are rather local committees, composed of public officials and private citizens who do the actual building with money loaned and (to the extent of one fifth of the total) donated by the national government. More than 200 local Societies have sprung up since 1920, and over 20,000 cottages and apartments have been built, many of them in attractive Garden Suburb setting.

Under the 1919 law all these new dwellings built by the Housing Societies are to be rented, not sold. But the pressure of the conservative group in Parliament and the need of more capital for building than could be secured by government loans resulted in the two 1922 decrees which have recently been modified.

The purpose of the decree of August 14, 1922 was to stimulate individual workingmen to build homes for themselves under the 1889 law, by granting to the first 10,000 who so built flat subsidies, or premiums, of not-to-exceed 3,000 francs per house, the savings bank lending four fifths of the remainder. The decree of October 14 offered a corresponding subsidy to the first 7,500 tenants purchasing houses constructed by the Societies, which are now required to sell if their tenants request it, utilizing the money so obtained to build more houses. The purchase therefore had to be in cash, but here again the Savings Bank was willing to advance four fifths of the amount.

The beneficiary, whether tenant or purchaser, has to be a person of "small means". This, as defined by statute, depends on income, modified by the size of the community (because it affects the cost of living) and the number of dependents in the family. Thus, under the latest amendment, the maximum income of a beneficiary may vary from 6,300 francs for a widow or widower, without children in a commune of less than 5000 inhabitants, to 24,000 francs for a man and wife with 9 or more children or grand-children in a city of over 60,000 population. Similarly, the maximum value of the house varies from 22,000 to 35,000 francs.

For 10 years after purchase, lodgers and boarders are prohibited, as well as the sale of liquor on the premises. Subletting or sale of the house during this period is permitted only under exceptional circumstances and with the consent of the Ministry of Labor. In case of sale or in case of violation of any of the conditions laid down, the subsidy must be returned with 6% interest; and to cover this contingency a mortgage is given for 2000 francs more than the amount of the subsidy.

Certain small additional "premiums" are granted in the new decrees to cover the cost of making and recording deeds.

Housing societies—except cooperative tenant societies, and even they at times—are obliged to sell at least one tenth of their houses and to retain for rental at least one third.

EDITH ELMER WOOD,  
Cape May Court House, N. J.

## RENTS IN HOLLAND

Rents demanded for houses constructed through subsidy by the Dutch Government, it is claimed are too high, not only with reference to the earning capacity of the occupants, but also as compared with the normal rent as laid down by the Department of Labor—the rents charged amounting to from one-fifth to one-fourth, or in some cases even one-third of the wages of the occupant—while the normal rent is considered to be from one-seventh to one-sixth of the worker's wages.

A thorough inquiry has been made into the subject and an urgent request has been made to all Building Associations that they aid the movement in order that action may be addressed to Parliament urging a revision of the present Government policy.

## HOUSING SHORTAGE DECREASING

Recent reports from Rotterdam indicate that building activity has fallen off considerably in the Netherlands during the past year, due in part to the general financial and industrial depression, but also due in part to a change in the housing situation. It is stated that through the Government's policy of granting

subsidies to municipalities, Building Societies and private persons who erected houses conforming to certain conditions, the shortage which existed immediately after the war has been caught up with to a considerable extent, especially in the larger cities.

A second factor in the improved condition is said to be the shift in population from the cities back to the country towns and villages of many workers who had been attracted to the cities by the high wages of the post-war period, but who have found themselves unemployed as the demand for labor slackened.

One interesting byproduct of this situation has been the increase in emigration out of Holland and especially to the United States. The authorities here have noted for some time that an unusually large proportion of the Dutch immigrants arriving in this country are of the skilled labor class, including particularly carpenters, bricklayers, masons and other building trades artisans.

## IN ITALY

Milan is in the midst of extensive tearing down and rebuilding of two separate quarters of the city under the auspices of the Autonomous Institute for Workingmen's Houses—one of those half-public, half-private Commissions which Italians believe have solved the puzzle of who is to build houses for wage earners.

A Milan engineer, P. Mezzanotte, has recently appealed to the Engineering College at Milan urging that the speculative builder be prevented from covering with apartment houses and other structures the little that remains of open land in the central portions of that city, and also urging preservation of the few private gardens that still remain.

He suggests as a means of encouraging the keeping of this land unoccupied and as gardens, that the owners be indemnified by the Government, through preferential application of building regulations and ordinances.

## MUSSOLINI SCORES LANDLORDS

A number of Italian landlords and building contractors recently sent a telegram of protest to Premier Mussolini complaining of a new decree giving certain privileges to tenants. When they received his reply, however, they probably wished that they had not sent such a protest, as he gave them a sharp reproof.

In their complaint the landlords declared the decree would discourage new construction and that it had shaken the confidence of the landlords and builders in the Facisti movement. In his reply Signor Mussolini said:

The landlords have shown themselves incapable of profiting by my previous decree because they used it as a chance to increase rents exorbitantly and anti-socially. They must realize that liberty has not only its rights but also its duties.

The Government must find ways to adjust matters for the benefit of all the citizens. I reject your protest, which in its manner at this time is absolutely inopportune.

The previous decree gave the landlords freedom to charge any rent they could get, while the latest measure to which objection has been made, curbed these rent-raising activities.

The "Institute for the Erection of Low-priced Houses" at Milan, finding it necessary to demolish two crowded slum sections in that city, has organized the reconstruction work in such manner that it will be accomplished progressively, block by block, utilizing for temporary structures open spaces such as gardens and rear yards. By this means it is planned that the inhabitants will not be deprived of shelter, but as they find it necessary to vacate their present homes in order that these may be razed, they will find temporary lodgings near their old homes, which they will be permitted to occupy up to the time of moving in to the new lodgings.

It would seem as if in Milan it has thus been possible to meet a difficulty which has given the government in every city much trouble, viz., how to re-house the displaced population in slum clearance schemes pending the erection of the new houses.

## IN SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

A most interesting and valuable symposium entitled "Recent Progress in Workmen's Housing in the Americas" is to be found in the *Bulletin* of the *Pan American Union* for February, 1924, comprising an article of some 46 pages. In this article housing conditions among the workingmen are discussed in detail with reference to the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Equador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras,



Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, Uruguay and Venezuela. There is also a brief reference to some of the war-housing developments in the United States.

This interesting compilation which is the most complete description of housing in "the Americas" that has yet come to us, is quite fully illustrated, showing bad housing conditions in some of these countries; but especially showing, both by photographs and plans, some of the new houses provided, both through Government aid and also through private enterprise. An attractive settlement of workmen's houses in Buenos Aires, part of a group of 300, built by the Government for the poorer families, furnishes one of the illustrations. It is stated that the average cost of these houses, which seem to be built in stucco is \$5,000 and the monthly rental approximately \$23.

Interesting houses in the Cafferata suburb of Buenos Aires are also shown. A great block tenement known as "Valentin Alsina" in Buenos Aires, a tenement building 4 stories in height, very similar to the New York type of tenement in its general scheme of construction, built by the Argentine Government for workingmen, provides accommodations for 67 families. It is stated that the apartments in this block dwelling rent for as low as \$15 a month. The plans are very similar to the plans of the City and Suburban model tenements of New York, the rooms being two rooms deep, with one group facing the street and the others built around a large square inner court open at the top and with staircases in each of the four corners.

Extremely interesting photographs showing unsanitary wooden houses and shacks in rural Brazil are a feature of the Report. These houses are of the crudest type. Their walls are made of round upright posts placed in the ground like a stockade. Others are typical mudhouses, or "dobe"; these are strung end to end along the village streets in the interior sections of the country.

Another illustration shows an interesting colony of houses built by the municipality in Pernambuco, in close proximity to the city, in the suburbs of the village of Arraial. This colony consists of 149 dwelling houses each having a living-room, sleeping-room, kitchen, bath and small yard.

Attractive illustrations show two colonies of laborers in Costa Rica, one on a coffee plantation and one a colony somewhat larger adjoining a banana plantation.

The Report is an extremely complete one and under each country discusses the existing situation as to housing shortage and the steps taken by the Government and others in the effort to meet that situation.

All students of housing who wish to acquaint themselves with conditions in "the Americas" will find it well worth while to obtain a copy of this important document. Copies can be obtained from the Pan American Union at Washington, D. C.

## PUBLIC UTILITY SOCIETIES

One of the useful institutions for the development of better housing in England is the so-called "Public Utility Society"—something that has no exact counterpart in the United States. The nearest approach to it is found in such limited-dividend housing companies as the City and Suburban Homes Company of New York—our largest corporation devoted to the building of improved dwellings.

The Public Utility Society is not, however, an institution confined strictly to England, but apparently flourishes in most European countries.

The International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation has recently sent out a questionnaire to the leading countries of Europe as to the details of organization of Public Utility Housing Societies in those countries and has published the results of that inquiry in a bulletin (Bulletin No. 2) issued in January, compiled by the Secretary of the organization, H. Chapman. Copies of the Bulletin can be obtained at Mr. Chapman's office, 3 Grays' Inn Place, London, W. C. 1. The Bulletin comprises a pamphlet of about 30 pages and gives information with reference to the organization of Public Utility Societies in the following countries: Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Spain and Switzerland.

The situation in each country is reported on under 13 different headings as follows:

Incorporation of Societies, Formation of a Society, Financing, Limit on Rate of Interest, Management, Marketing, Shares and

Stocks, Subsidies, Sale of Houses, Audit and Examination, Central Society, Acquisition of Land, Approximate Number of Societies and of Houses Built, Results of the Activities of the Societies.

Students of the housing question will find it helpful to obtain a copy of this valuable Report before the edition becomes exhausted.

A supplementary bulletin to be issued in May will give similar particulars for several additional countries, including the important examples of France, Belgium, Sweden and CzechoSlovakia, and will contain an article commenting on the points of outstanding interest in the methods employed by these various countries.

## THE RENT SITUATION

The rent situation seems to be very much the same as it has been during the past year. Conflicting reports have recently been made with reference to it from different sources. A recent survey made by the National Association of Real Estate Boards through its constituent local bodies indicates that rents are becoming stabilized in three-fourths of American cities. This Report issued early in May states that rent prices for houses and apartments in 74% of the principal cities of the United States have reached a state of equilibrium. The Report adds that a downward trend is reported by 16% of the cities; and an upward climb is reported by only 10%.

The investigation, based on reports from constituent real estate boards in 102 cities represents an attempt made to survey residential rents of all types of property throughout the country. It is not an estimate but the result of actual surveys. Reports in practically every case were made after a careful analysis of the local situation by a special committee of the local real estate board. These reports cover three types of property: Class A, highest class structures in most desirable locations; Class B, middle class structures in moderate priced locations; Class C, the cheapest class of structures in the least desirable locations.

Contrasting the results disclosed by this recent survey with a similar survey made in similar manner as of November first, last, the National Association of Real Estate Boards comments as follows:

At that time 40% of the cities listed reported an upward tendency for rents, 50% reported rents about stabilized, and 10% reported a downward trend.

## THE BEST RESIDENCE TYPE OF DWELLING AVERAGES \$15 PER ROOM PER MONTH

The average rent charged for single family dwellings in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 population is now \$15 per month per room for the best structures in the city's most desirable locations. For the middle group it is \$10 per month per room. For the least desirable structures in the least desirable locations the average is \$4 per month per room. In cities of 250,000 population and over the average is \$25 per month per room for the Class A dwellings, \$10 for the Class B dwellings, and \$5 for the Class C dwellings.

Semi-detached houses and two-family houses show a lowering from these rates of \$10 per month per room in the Class A rent group in cities of 250,000 and over, and a reduction of \$3-\$5 in the same group in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 population; with very much less variation for Class B and Class C structures.

Apartment rents in multiple-apartment structures average \$25, \$12 and \$5 per month per room for structures of the three classes reported on in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 population. In cities of 250,000 population and over they average \$25, \$15, and \$9 per month per room, for the respective Classes.

The plutocrat of the rent scale is the kitchenette apartment of most modern construction in the most desirable location. This type averages in the largest cities \$30 per month per room.

## ANOTHER SURVEY SHOWS DIFFERENT FACTS

This is the rent situation as disclosed by the studies and opinions expressed by local realtors throughout the country. An estimate made about the same time by the National Industrial Conference Board indicates quite a different situation. According to statements issued by that body as recently as the end of April, New York landlords increased rentals almost 10% in the 4-month period from November 15th to March 15th last. An average increase in rent in the same 4-month period throughout the country comprising 181 different cities was 3% and in a 12-month period it was 8%.



This study also brings out the fact that during the past 10 years rents throughout the country have been increased as much as 85%. The East and the Middle West led in the size of rent increases; Chester, Pennsylvania with an increase of between 21 and 30% led the country for the period under review.

In only one section of the country, the South, have there been more decreases than increases since last winter. In 46 cities the rent bills of the average wage earner have doubled.

In making this survey the Board received returns from nearly 600 real estate brokers and others in close touch with the situation throughout the nation.

In 83 cities no raises in rents were reported. In 69 cities there were increases and in 26 there were decreases. These increases seem in no sense to have been limited to the large centers of population. Even in cities with a population of from 50,000 to 100,000 there were 19 rent increases of 10% or less; 6 increases of from 11 to 20% and 1 of from 21 to 30%. Decreases in this group were 10% or less in 11 cities, 11 to 20% in 3 cities and in 29 cities no change.

Among the smaller cities with a population less than 50,000, there were 25 out of 41 where no changes were reported between last November and March.

### PROBLEM A NATION-WIDE PROBLEM

That the evil of high rents and the attempts to check it and control it through legislative action are not confined to great centers of population and more particularly New York City, is evidenced by the surveys that have been thus summarized. That the realtors of the country realize this situation is evidenced in the report made at the meeting of the National Association of Real Estate Boards held at Augusta this winter when Henry R. Brigham, Chairman of the Association's Committee on Housing, called attention to the dangers inherent in the situation and indicated that America was threatened with a wave of rent-control legislation unless aggressive steps were taken to eradicate the real evils which give some basis for the general tenants' discontent.

In this report Mr. Brigham calls on the Association to throw the weight of its 18,000 active membership against conditions now cramping the possibilities of comfortable housing and home ownership throughout the nation. He points out that neither con-

struction costs or rents are at all likely to fall precipitately or to any great extent in the near future, and adds that the danger of rent control legislation is not fanciful, but real. Mr. Brigham in his report points out that such legislation is actually in operation in New York and Washington under the guise of an "emergency" which many people believe has long since passed. As he very appropriately says:

No one would have thought of an emergency existing, when, through the normal action of supply and demand, prices of any given commodity should gradually and steadily rise, over a period of years. Now, however, we see New York and Washington without the slightest sign of any emergency in the old sense, claiming an emergency continuing indefinitely, and demanding repeated extensions of rent control legislation, and Philadelphia and probably other cities are threatened with similar legislation.

He adds:

Rents over the United States, as a rule, have risen gradually following the rise in building costs, but they have not risen in proportion to the costs, and there is evidence that they are tending toward stabilization.

## IN NEW YORK

In New York State the situation has remained very much the same as it has been for several years past. On the one hand the realtors have claimed that an emergency no longer exists, many of them expressing the view that there is no longer a shortage of houses and that the occasion for rent control legislation has long since passed. Against this attitude is the rather clamorous demand of the embattled tenants that the rent laws shall remain indefinitely and that the protection which they have had accorded to them in preventing increases of rent shall not be withdrawn.

An official body, the State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning to which the legislature assigned the task of reporting on the rent situation, has after hearings lasting through many months and including all parts of the state in which much testimony was taken, reached a conclusion that the emergency still exists and that the rent laws should be continued for at least another year.

The Governor has strongly supported this recommendation and as a result a bill was passed at the legislative session recently con-

cluded, extending the emergency rent laws for two years more. This bill has been signed by the Governor and is now a law and the Rent Laws are still continuing on the statute books. It is expected that the new law will be contested in the courts on the ground that the present legislature cannot determine that an emergency in housing will exist in 1925. Notwithstanding a flood of bills dealing with the rent situation all intended to curry political favor with the tenants—and therefore with the greater number of voters—it is encouraging to note that only 4 rent laws passed the legislature.

How long this situation is to continue no human being can tell, but the evils which were clearly foreseen when the rent laws were first proposed some years ago are now quite manifest to all thoughtful observers. A Frankenstein monster has been created which threatens to destroy its creators. As in England, it has been found most difficult to repeal such laws when once put on the statute books.

### IN MASSACHUSETTS

How difficult it is to once let go is indicated by the experience of other states than New York. In Massachusetts emergency rent laws were passed in 1919, 1920 and again in 1923. The Commission on the Necessaries of Life in its Annual Report made in January discussing this question recommends that practically all of these existing emergency rent laws—most of which seek to protect the tenants in the occupancy of their dwellings and apartments—shall be extended until May 1925. This recommendation has been adopted by the Massachusetts legislature.

### IN WASHINGTON

In Washington, Congress is still wrestling with this difficult question. At the Federal capitol the existing rent control law, which is administered by the Rent Commission of the District of Columbia, expires on May 22nd, and there has been much discussion and much difference of opinion as to whether the emergency which led to the enactment of the original statute has passed or whether it is necessary to have these laws extended. President Coolidge not long ago issued a public statement to the effect that in his judgment the emergency still existed and that the rent laws should be continued for the present.

That the Emergency still exists would seem to be borne out by the results of a recent report made by Alfred B. Moore to the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia under date of April 3rd, last. In trying to ascertain the facts, 650 to 700 local real estate brokers and operators were circularized with a request that they furnish a complete list of the houses and apartments in their control which were vacant and available for rental purposes, with a description and the rental price thereof.

At the same time the police of the District completed a census of all vacant rentable property in the District. This census disclosed 1352 separate possibilities. The real estate brokers' and the police census combined, with all duplicates eliminated, gave a final result showing 1197 apartments and dwellings for purposes of consideration as vacant and for rent of various sizes and at various rentals.

Each one of these dwellings and apartments was then later inspected by the staff making the survey to ascertain the detailed conditions and facts.

In summing up his conclusions the investigator reports as follows:

In view of the disclosures of this survey of the present chaotic state of the housing situation in the District of Columbia, my opinion is that the emergency is as great for at least the temporary continuation of the Rent Commission as was the necessity during the war, inasmuch as during the period necessary for the situation to properly adjust itself, it does and will require a body clothed with the proper authority to uphold its decisions, to determine right from wrong for the best interests of all, and protect those who today are unable to protect themselves from conditions over which they have no control.

Meanwhile the whole situation is in somewhat of a legislative snarl. The bill extending the life of the District Rent Commission and the law under which it operates has passed both the House and the Senate but with amendments tacked on to it by the Senate which necessitates the bill going back to the House for confirmation, after which it is going into Joint Committee.

As the present law expires on May 22nd and Congress is determined to adjourn on June 7th, there is a possibility that the whole matter may go by default owing to the pressure of legislative business at the close of the session. In the meantime the Courts are paying attention to the situation.



There is a very strong difference of opinion in Washington itself as to whether Rent Control legislation shall be continued or not. The latest manifestation of this opinion being voiced by the recent decision of the U. S. Supreme Court in the case of a fashionable apartment house where the constitutionality of the rent law was under review. Here the highest court held that before it could act on the constitutional questions involved, it would be necessary for the lower court to ascertain whether an actual "emergency" existed in the local rent situation when the rents in this particular case were fixed by the Rent Commission of the District in August, 1922.

### U. S. SUPREME COURT SERVES NOTICE

This decision of the United States Supreme Court has a much wider significance than mere application to this particular case. To the thoughtful observer it would seem to indicate that the highest court in the land has about come to the conclusion that it is time for these war-emergency laws—which were quite justifiable at the time they were enacted—to come to an end. Mr. Justice Holmes who always takes a broad, progressive and liberal view of public questions, in his opinion in this case handed down as recently as the end of April has the following to say on this subject:

A law depending upon the existence of an emergency, or other certain state of facts to uphold it, may cease to operate if the emergency ceases or the facts change, even though valid when passed.

He adds, discussing the conditions in the District which led to the enactment of the Rent Law, the following:

It is a matter of public knowledge that the Government has considerably diminished its demand for employes, which was one of the great causes of the sudden afflux of people to Washington, and other causes, have lost, at least, much of their power.

Obviously the facts should be accurately ascertained and carefully weighed, and this can be done more conveniently in the Supreme Court of the District than here. The evidence should be preserved so that if necessary it can be considered by this court.

When one reflects that the decision of the United States Supreme Court sustaining the New York and Washington Rent

Laws as valid was based solely upon their being emergency legislation enacted to cope with an actual emergent situation, it would seem, reading between the lines, as if our highest court had come to the conclusion that the time had come to put an end to this interference with the right of private contract.

It is not unlikely, that a decision of this court may be expected before long which will put an end to rent control legislation in this country. This is probably the only way in which it can be ended; for, it is rather hopeless to expect a legislative body, constituted as it is with members who are quickly responsive to political conditions and influences, to pass legislation which will be distasteful to so large a portion of their constituencies.

As symptomatic of the interest which legislators take in this subject, there may be cited the resolution introduced in Congress in January by Representative Royal H. Weller of New York calling for the appointment of a Joint Committee of Congress to "investigate the housing conditions in the United States and the effect of such conditions upon the existing rentals in its relation to the high cost of living."

This resolution was referred to the Committee on Rules but has not yet been enacted into law. It does not seem likely to be enacted into law, Congress being somewhat surfeited just now with inquiries and committees of investigation.

## EXTRAORDINARY RENT INCREASE IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1923

The rental situation is becoming more acute in Philadelphia. The 1923 rent survey of the Philadelphia Housing Association covering 1733 properties in 7 industrial sections showed rents to be 20% higher than the preceding year. This is a large increase over the 5.6% rise noted in 1922.

On the basis of the cross section of the city used in the survey, there has been no other year within the past decade when so many tenants had rents increased.

Over 65% of the houses of the survey having tenant occupancy had rents raised in 1923, as against 28% in 1922. In the last previous high year, 1921, following the peak costs of 1920, the percentage of properties which suffered an increase was about 40%.

Rents for most of the properties included in the survey were known to the Housing Association since 1914, although some were included of which only later records were available.

### RENTS IN ADVANCE OF OTHER LIVING COSTS

These rents compared with the rates of 1914, show an average increase of 85.4% for all districts, as compared with the average of 56.4% in 1922.

According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the retail prices of specified food commodities in Philadelphia, in November 1923, were only 54% above the prices for the same month a decade ago, and only 4% above November, 1922, while the index number for all commodities in November of the past year was only 52 points above the same commodities in 1913, or a decrease since the preceding year. Thus in the face of a relatively small change in the price of all commodities, which indicates lessened costs for upkeep and maintenance of houses, rents have shown this big increase of 20% in 1923.

### INCREASE ABOUT UNIFORM

The rate of increase has been practically uniform, approximating in each district about 17.5% with the exception of the section South of Market and East of Broad Streets where the increase was 26.8%, and West Philadelphia which was 22.2%, and the area between Market and Lehigh Avenue, East of Broad Street, where the rate was 21.3%. West Philadelphia's increase of 146% over 1914 is higher than any other section.

### MIDDLE CLASS HIT HARDEST

The highest percentage of properties having rent increases came in the group renting between \$30 and \$50, the number of these being slightly greater than the \$15 to \$30 group. In 1922 the lowest rental group experienced a greater increase. Profiteers were bolder in 1923. Many instances of gouging were found. In the Grays Ferry district an entire block of houses was bought for speculative purposes, and the rents which were \$20 in 1921, and \$23 in 1922, were raised to \$40. On South 18th Street, a six-room house which rented for \$18 in 1914 and \$25 in 1922 was let at \$60 in 1923, although no

change had been made in sanitary equipment. The tenant to meet this rent crowded in several sub-tenants from whom she obtained \$67.50. On Waverly Street a four-room house which in 1914 rented for \$12 and in 1922 for \$14, had been raised to \$37, with no repairs to premises. The tenant has taken in two lodgers to meet this increase.

One four-room property in West Philadelphia showed an increase of 108% over the preceding year. Another 127%, and still another 140%, following minor repairs by the owner.

### RENT INCREASES FOLLOW REPAIRS

During the year 57.3% of the properties received repairs or improvements of some kind varying from minor repairs, such as papering a room or patching plastering to major repairs and improvements, such as the installation of gas, electricity or plumbing fixtures. Of this number 63.1% or 401 properties out of 635, were repaired by the owner, or the cost was shared by owner and tenant, and 36.9% were made by the tenant only.

Of the properties having some repair or improvement made, 61.9% had rent increases. And rents were raised in 70% of the houses where the owner made or shared the cost of repairs. Even where the tenant made all the repairs or improvements, in 47% of the cases they had their rents raised.

Among all properties where rents were raised, 40% were straight increases without the excuse of repairs or improvements to justify them. In 24 cases the cause of the rent increase was given as increased assessments over 1922, while in 60 cases the increase was alleged to be due to new owners. Here as many as 4 new owners for one property within a year were reported. Already tenants of 87 properties have been notified of a further rent increase for 1924, due to new increased assessments.

### MORE HOMES OWNED

Home ownership continues to increase. Of the 1,733 properties which in 1914 were rented, 544 have owner occupancy, 145 of which were bought during 1923. Seven houses which had occupant owners in 1922 are now rented leaving a net gain of 138 owner-occupants among this group of 1,253 houses, which were rental properties in 1922. This indicates an in-



crease in owner occupancy of 11%, as compared with a similar increase of 6.3% in the preceding year. The forced pressure brought by rent gouging has caused a further increase in home ownership for Philadelphia. The high renters of 1922 have gone into the mortgaged-owner group where family resources were pooled to escape constantly soaring rental charges.

### SUB-LETTING INCREASED

The gain in home ownership is offset by the high percentage of families found sub-letting rooms either as apartments or to roomers. Many sub-lets show that the new owners have reduced their own living quarters materially in order to get the supplementary income to pay for the house. This has also been found true where exorbitant rent increases occurred and tenants tried to meet the added costs by multiple occupancy without increased sanitary equipment required by law for the protection of public health.

### NEGRO TENANTS HIT HARDER THAN WHITES

Contrary to records of preceding years the negro tenants experienced a higher percentage of rent increase, as well as a larger percentage of properties having rent increases, than white tenants, and also heavier than they had experienced in preceding years. While 65% of all properties were subjected to rental increases in 1923, the rate for whites was 62.2%, and for negroes 71.7%. The negro tenants South of Market Street between the rivers were affected in largest numbers.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia.

### TENEMENT RENTS HIGHER THAN DWELLINGS IN PHILADELPHIA

The Philadelphia Housing Association has recently compiled some interesting data, the results of a survey of tenement accommodations for 2655 families in 501 buildings, all of which have operated in violation of the housing law at some time during the past 10 years.

Of these buildings 238 were found to be no longer in the tenement class. Of this number 30% reverted to single-

family occupancy; 38% to 2-family occupancy; 12% to rooming houses, and the remaining 20% have been demolished or are serving miscellaneous uses.

In the remaining 263 which are now occupied as tenements, accommodating 1418 families—practically all of which were formerly single-family dwelling houses—rents are excessively high, exceeding rents for like accommodations in one-family houses.

The rent charges all run correspondingly higher than those reported in a recent rental survey of 1111 dwelling houses as shown in the following table.

#### MONTHLY RENTAL CHARGES PER ROOM IN TENEMENTS VERSUS DWELLINGS

	Tenement Apartments	Dwellings
Properties studied.....	1,257	1,111
Less than \$5. per room.....	19.6%	54.8%
Between \$5. and \$9.99 per room.....	37.6%	43.5%
“ 10. “ 14.99 “ “ .....	24.1%	1.4%
“ 15. “ 19.99 “ “ .....	11.9%	0.18%
\$20. and over “ “ .....	6.6%	0.0

It will be seen that of the dwellings, occupied largely by industrial workers, less than 2/10 of 1% had an average monthly rental of over \$15 per room; while in these tenements, housing the same working class, 18.5% of the families were in this high rental group. In fact 6.6% of tenement families were paying a monthly rent of \$20 or more per room, while not a single dwelling was found with such a high rent. Further, only 1.4% of the dwellings had monthly rental rates between \$10 and \$15 per room, but in the tenements this percentage is 24.1. Moreover, in the dwellings, 98.3% had monthly rents averaging less than \$10 per room, while this percentage in the tenements is only 57.2.

One explanation for these exorbitant rental rates may be the greed of agents, as shown in the case of a property which 3 months ago was rented for \$60. The original tenant sub-let to two other families who paid her \$20 and \$25 a month. When the agent discovered that his house could be used as a tenement, the original tenants were put out, and the 3 families

now occupying the property pay rents to the agent that amount to \$157.50 per month.

Practically all the tenements studied which are in operation now were formerly one-family dwellings that had been converted to multiple-occupancy. About 65% were 3 stories in height, while 35% were 4 stories or over. About 32% housed 3 families each; 24% contained 4 families each; 18.6% accommodated 5 families each, and the remaining number held 6 or more families each. Both height and occupancy indicating buildings poorly adapted for multiple use.

### TENEMENT CONGESTION INCREASING

It was found that 32% of the families living in the tenements included in this study, occupied one-room apartments in which all the customary practices of family living are carried on. Some of the families living in one-room apartments were large; often consisting of man, wife and from 3 to 5 children. One 3-room tenement is occupied by 3 families paying \$54 a month. The only water supply is a hydrant in the yard. About 38% of the families occupied 2-room apartments, and almost 20% occupied apartments of 3 rooms; 7% were in 4-room apartments, while only 3% occupied apartments of 5 or more rooms each.

The last previous authentic survey of tenement occupancy made in 1912 reported 27% of the tenement families living in one-room apartments; 37% in 2-room apartments and about 17% in 3 rooms.

Houses occupied as tenements prior to 1915 had a lower percentage of one-room occupancy than those converted at a later period, while the percentage of 3 and more room occupancy was greater at the earlier date.

### GREAT INSANITATION

Along with these conditions gross insanitation was discovered. In fact only 34 out of 263 tenements were found to be wholly free from violations of the housing and sanitary laws, there being 87% with one or more violations. Sanitary complaints—largely defective plumbing, leaky roofs and flooded cellars—were found on 54% of the properties; and inadequate sanitary equipment in 59%; 19 windowless rooms were noted,

and 6 cases of cellar living. On 33% of the properties there were other miscellaneous violations.

In one 9-room house renting for \$88 a month, 33 occupants were found. Five girls sleep in one bedroom; 5 boys in another; man, wife and 4 children in another; and each of 2 remaining bedrooms is occupied by man, wife and 3 children, making a total of 21 persons sleeping in 4 bedrooms. The sanitary equipment of this house consists of 2 sinks and one bath room; and there are no fire safeguards.

In another tenement occupied by 6 families and three lodgers, there was dangerous disrepair; the plaster was giving way in several rooms; the roof leaked so badly during rain storms that beds had to be moved and receptacles used to catch the water; and in the fourth floor windows every pane of glass was out.

The lack of owner supervision is in some measure responsible for this insanitation; for in less than 40% of the tenements did a janitor or owner live on the premises. That is, about 60% were without resident supervision.

Equally responsible, however, is the failure of the City to provide an adequate housing inspection service to keep such properties under surveillance. It is a physical impossibility for the 4 men, now constituting the regular housing staff to cover the thousands of similar properties in Philadelphia today.

No large city in the United States is so undermanned in its housing inspection force, as is Philadelphia. Not a single additional housing inspector has been appointed in the city since 1909, although the population has increased 400,000 since that year.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia.

## RENT CONTROL IN ARGENTINA

South America appears to be very similarly situated to North America. Recent dispatches from Argentina report that the National Congress of that country has recently, by decree of the President, extended for another period the existing rent laws which expired some months ago. Thus, as in England and New York, it is found difficult to let go of rent laws when once they have been enacted.



## RENT CONTROL IN INDIA

That the Far East is suffering from the same situation as the United States is evidenced by a measure introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council on January 24th, last, in the form of a bill to amend the Calcutta Rent Act of 1924.

In connection with this legislation it is pointed out that the condition of tenants in Calcutta continues unsatisfactory, owing to the limited housing accommodations of the city. Following the precedent in the further continuance of the Rent Act in London, the Calcutta Rent Bill gives an extension of the existing Rent Act up to the year 1927, allowing adequate time for the building of additional premises—some of which are still in the course of construction—to house the increasing population of the city.

Recognizing the right of landlords to some increase in the returns from their investment in house property in the city, a proportion of 15% increase is allowed to the previous proportion of 10% in the laying down of the standard rent. The extension of time provided for in this bill will give sufficient opportunity for the formulation of definite action which may be taken on the recommendations of the Committee appointed to inquire into housing conditions in Calcutta.

## RENT CONTROL LAWS IN EUROPE

That Rent Control laws are by no means limited to the United States is evidenced by a recent bulletin published by the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation as an international symposium on Rent Restriction Legislation—a bulletin of 28 pages (Bulletin No. 1), compiled by H. Chapman, the Secretary of that organization, and containing a Foreword by Hon. Neville Chamberlain, the British Minister of Health at that time.

The interesting information contained in this pamphlet was based upon a questionnaire sent to the leading countries of Europe in which some 14 different points were covered as follows:

Legislation Adopted, Scope of Legislation, Increases of Rent Allowed, Protection From Eviction, Sub-Tenants, Death of a Tenant,

Notice of Increase, Repairs, "Key-Money" or Premiums, Mortgage Increases, Disputes, Payment of Part of Increase to the State, Effect of the Legislation, Repeal or Extension of the Legislation.

The countries with regard to which definite reports on all of these points are made in this document are the following:

Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, New York State, Norway, Roumania, Spain, and Sweden.

All realtors and persons interested in the control of rents will find it advantageous to obtain a copy of this interesting and valuable bulletin. Copies can be obtained through H. Chapman, 3 Grays Inn Place, London, W. C. 1, England.

### RENT CONTROL GONE MAD

To what extent legislation controlling rents and protecting tenants in the occupancy of their homes may go, has been dramatically illustrated in recent weeks by the action of the new Labor Government in England.

This is practically the first instance in which the socialistic tendencies of that Government have had a chance to manifest themselves in Parliament.

Up to this time they have been on their good behavior and have apparently followed the traditional course of the "beggar who became king" and been duly conservative, so that the English press and public have been pleased to find that the lion, which they feared would rend them in pieces, has in reality "roared as gently as a sucking dove."

Now, however, the lion shows his teeth. Perhaps it is unfair to the king of beasts to compare the socialistic group at present in the saddle in England to so regal a creature; we feel sure that with their socialistic point of view they would not care to be compared to anything that might be termed "regal."

Reading between the lines it would seem to be evident to an American familiar with Irish political methods as practiced in a democracy, that in all probability the "bill to prevent eviction" which was introduced by the Minister of Health, Mr. Wheatley, on March 31st, last, was introduced primarily for the purpose of making an issue on which the Labor Party might go to the people.

It is also likely that the bill was to some extent a political gesture and intended to satisfy the more radical group within the Labor Party itself, especially those constituents of it who are known as the "Clydeside group."

## THE LANDLORD TO GIVE FREE RENT TO THE UNEMPLOYED

The feature of this measure which has created so much discussion was the naïve proposal that so long as a tenant was unemployed his landlord should be compelled by law to allow him to occupy his house rent free. While the measure was thoroughly beaten in the House of Commons on April 7th when it came to a vote, the whole episode is not without its lesson for us in the United States who, in some states, have had to live under similar rent legislation now for 3 or 4 years—legislation enacted originally as a temporary and "emergency" measure, but which we have seen extended from year to year as the pressure of political interests became insistent in its demands for the continuation of this legislation.

Notwithstanding this serious defeat on an important question of policy, Premier Ramsay MacDonald did not resign the reins of government but called attention to what he had said upon assuming power that he would not regard such decisions as a vote of "no confidence."

Without a very thorough knowledge of the peculiar situation that exists in Great Britain, it is a little difficult for us to understand the full political significance of the occurrence. It appears that there is great unemployment throughout England and in Scotland as well—perhaps to even greater extent in Scotland than in England. Under the existing law all unemployed persons are entitled to an unemployment dole, or weekly payment from the State. In England it is the custom of the Poor Relief officers to take the question of lodgings into consideration and to make an allowance to cover the rent, but in Scotland it is not the custom of the Poor Relief officers to do this; but on the contrary they decline to make an allowance for rent.

The Minister of Health, Mr. Wheatley, representing a Scottish constituency and one that is rather radical in its elements, has naturally therefore sought to present a measure that would bring relief to his constituents and has done so

without much regard to fundamental principles of economic law, government or policy.

It seems a far cry to the possibility of such a situation in the United States; but who would have said 5 years ago that it would be possible to enact such rent control laws as are now on the statute books in New York, the District of Columbia and other parts of the country, and have such laws sustained by our highest courts as valid exercises of legislative authority?

We may easily come in time to a similar situation, in view of the increasing tendency on the part of politicians to "give the public what it wants"—when it is a very large public and has considerable votes—irrespective of the consequences or the principles involved.

It is for this reason that it seems appropriate to devote a portion of our columns to quoting from the speech of Neville Chamberlain, one of the Conservative leaders and the former Minister of Health, in discussing this measure in Parliament a few weeks ago. He said in part on that occasion:

\*\*\*The right hon. Gentleman told us last week that the Labor party's housing programme was not a Socialist programme. I wonder what he calls this? I certainly would not call it Socialism, for Socialism at any rate, in its proposals for the redistribution of wealth, seeks to make all equal. It does not single out a number of men who happen to be engaged in one particular occupation for punishment. While there may be some sort of Robin Hood kind of romance about the idea of despoiling the rich and distributing the proceeds among the poor, this Measure does not even do that, for many landlords are no better off than their tenants. This is not Socialism. This is, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, the revolution itself, during which self-constituted autocrats will wreak personal vengeance upon their enemies amid the exulting cheers and laughter of their friends until the day comes when they too suffer the fate of their victims and are devoured by the monsters they created. The right hon. Gentleman is a very adroit Parliamentarian. He has sought to divert our attention from the remedy he proposes by devoting almost the whole of his speech to the evil which he seeks to put an end to. On this side, in fact in every part of the House, there is an appreciation of the sufferings of the unemployed. There is no want of sympathy with them. Our charge against the right hon. Gentleman is, not that he is trying to help the unemployed, but that he has in this Bill introduced an entirely new principle, the principle that an individual who stands in need of one of the essentials of life shall have that need satisfied, not by the community, but by some particular individual who happens to



possess the article of which he is in want. I think the House realises that this is not only a new but a far-reaching principle. \* \* \*

\*\*\*This Bill appears to me to be ill-thoughtout, not only in principle, but in detail. It bears every evidence of having been hastily put together in the anxiety to surrender quickly to an ultimatum from the Clyde. Let me draw attention to one or two considerations which, perhaps, the right hon. Gentleman has not yet had time to consider. Why is there only one ground stated here? Why has no consideration to be taken of the cases where the tenant, though unemployed himself, has relatives with him who may be employed and in receipt of wages? What about the man who has lodgers and sub-tenants? I daresay the right hon. Gentleman will say that this is to be taken into account in considering the greater or lesser hardship. \* \* \*

\*\*\*If the right hon. Gentleman really desires that the unemployed are to have houses provided for them free, let him bring in a Measure which says so in so many words. That would be the end of private enterprise, so far as the housing of the people is concerned and thereby would be popular among hon. Members opposite. It would put upon the State or upon the local authorities a burden which would be absolutely colossal in amount. \* \* \*

## THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

All signs point to the continuation of a year of heavy building construction throughout the country if one can judge from the forecast made by different agencies vitally concerned with this industry—with little prospect of the needs of the average working-man being met to any degree by this new construction.

A forecast made early in the year by the *Architectural Forum* based upon facts and opinions received from 1668 architects in every section of the country who reported confidentially on the projects in their offices indicates that building activity in 1924 will be at least equal and probably greater than in 1923 in the value of new building contracts. This survey based on these architects' estimates indicates an increase of \$500,000,000 in building contracts in the year 1924. The *Architectural Forum* in this annual survey and forecast adds:

Naturally, certain offsetting conditions may appear, such as the definite development of a buyer's strike, which will occur in the late spring of 1924 if the great volume of building material orders are placed at that time, and bring about a considerable increase in prices. If this condition actually develops, the figures for the latter half of 1924 will be smaller than anticipated. It is expected, unless prices go too high, there will be a late reaction in the fall of 1924,

providing during the year two peaks of building activity, totaling more than \$5,000,000,000 for the year.

A similar survey and forecast made, however, in quite a different way by the *Building Age* last November is equally instructive. That journal sent out last fall a questionnaire to the 1500 local Chambers of Commerce throughout the United States and received reports from 441 cities and towns giving in detail their building requirements and needs. These reports were not confined to any one section of the country but applied to all sections and can therefore be considered as thoroughly representative of conditions throughout the country.

### THE ESTIMATED SHORTAGE

This survey indicated that at that time in cities and towns of under 25,000 population there was an estimated shortage of 533,179 dwellings, and in cities of over 25,000 population a shortage of 165,899 dwellings. The money value of the present housing shortage in cities and towns of under 25,000 was estimated as \$3,177,394,000; and in cities of more than 25,000 population it was estimated at \$2,208,904,000; and for all classes of construction \$4,869,700,000. The survey adds that from the figures obtained it would seem as if 35% of the dwelling shortage would be made up during the year 1924.

It also reaches the conclusion that the amount of building construction in 1924 will be close to \$4,345,000,000 and well above the normal \$3,000,000,000 construction year and that 1924 will rank along with 1922 and 1923 as the biggest construction years in the United States.

### THE NEEDS EACH DAY

This survey makes an interesting estimate of the normal requirements of housing in this country, giving the increase in population in the United States as 4,620 persons a day. Estimating the average number of persons in a family as 5, it points out that in order to keep pace with the normal growth of population it is necessary to provide 924 new homes every day in the United States which would give a figure of over 300,000 homes needed every year in the United States.

That these predictions are sound the building statistics of the year thus far seem to bear out. The latest returns available,

viz., those for the first three months of the year, indicate that the building activity in that period breaks all previous records. Statistics from 213 cities reported to the *American Contractor* show the largest number of building permits on record totaling the amazing sum of \$419,043,491, or 76,477 different permits issued. This is over \$20,000,000 in excess of permits issued for a similar period last year in the same cities. The chief factor in this increase is the increased activity in the city of New York in which building permits were issued during the first quarter of the year for \$188,627,232 or practically 45% of the value accredited to the whole nation. It is significant that the figures for March exceed the combined valuation of the two preceding months of January and February. Chicago ranks second to New York in the estimated amount of building construction, with Detroit, Los Angeles, Philadelphia following in the order named.

Other forecasts and surveys from reliable quarters all bear out these estimates. The New York Trust Company in February stated that building requirements are still so large that the outlook for 1924 is for at least another year of record building activity and indicates that \$5,000,000,000 will probably be the total amount of building construction and that with this extent of activity a considerable degree of the building shortage will be made up by the close of the year.

### COSTS STAY UP

It is not surprising that with this amount of construction contemplated and with the available supply of labor limited that the cost of building should practically stay at the high level that it has been at for several years past, or that it should even increase. An analysis of building material prices made by the *American Contractor* shows that there was very slight recession in building material prices during March from the level they held at the end of February, and that at that period they stood at 90% of the average for the previous 5-year period. Similarly, labor costs show no change from the February level. These are now the highest they have been since the War, or the highest they have ever been in the history of the construction industry in this country.

An interesting analysis of wages for labor and prices of building material in relation to the volume of building is to be found

in the January issue of that magazine in a most valuable article written by the editor Mr. E. J. Brunner under the title "Conditions Facing 1924 Construction".

### COST OF CONSTRUCTION DOUBLED IN 10 YEARS

A bulletin issued late in April by the National Industrial Conference Board gives the results of the study which that organization has been making of the building situation throughout the country. One of the findings of this study that is worthy of note is to the effect that the cost of labor and of materials stand at exactly the same increased level for the first time since 1920. This study covered the leading American cities and included all of the crafts and leading elements in building materials. It was found that the cost of construction in the United States has doubled in the last 10 years. The Report adds that the general trend of building costs as a whole is downward for building materials and upward for all wages, adding that there is nothing to indicate any appreciable reduction in building costs in the near future, conditions throughout the country as a whole being considered.

### LABOR COSTS

That there is no likelihood of reduction in the cost of building labor in the immediate future is indicated by a similar survey of the situation in the building industry made by S. W. Straus & Company and based largely on data gathered at the convention of the Building Code Department of the American Federation of Labor at Portland, Oregon, last summer. At that time reports from the labor organizations throughout the country indicated that all building labor was employed and that though the number of apprentices was increasing rapidly, there was still a considerable shortage of building labor.

Studies of this situation made by the *American Contractor* as recently as April indicate that wage scales during March and effective April first, showed a strong tendency to mount to still higher levels; 62 raises in separate crafts were reported from 14 cities during March and 10 cuts were reported from 4 cities during the same period. The *American Contractor* adds that this is a distinct upward movement compared with the increases of the previous month during which 26 raises occurred. These



figures, however, do not take into consideration the bonus payments granted or reduced.

The *American Contractor* adds that present indications are that wages will continue to rise slightly during the next few months if the present demand for building labor continues firm. There is a general awakening in the building trades to the danger of the bonus system. Recent studies made in Chicago indicate that rising bonuses have been known to increase labor costs as much as 50% in a few weeks. With the increased demand for labor and the shortage of labor supply cut off by the restriction of immigration, there is little prospect in sight of any material decrease in the cost of building for some time to come.

### HOW THIS AFFECTS HOUSING

There seems to be general agreement that notwithstanding the enormous extent of building operations now going on in the United States—the greatest amount the country has ever seen—that little relief is being brought to the housing problem insofar as the average workingman is concerned, the cost of construction being so great as to make production of houses that are within the purchasing price of the ordinary workingman a negligible quantity.

In this connection Henry R. Brigham, Chairman of the Housing Committee of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, in response to a recent inquiry had the following to say:

So far as I know, very few houses are being built in any large city for the poor people. Present building costs are out of proportion to what the poor people can buy. Such relief as is being obtained is through the building of houses for persons of moderate means, thus relieving the housing shortage in general, and so indirectly relieving the pressure on the people. Therefore any artificial forcing or holding down of rentals or any artificial maintenance of high costs which retard building retard also the relief to the poorer persons which can come through a general increase of the supply of houses.

There are, I believe, opportunities for reducing housing construction costs which should be pushed much harder, such as elimination of unreasonable labor union rules, the simplification and standardization of building codes, and the use of more economical methods of construction.

When costs have been reduced it may be possible again to build for the poorer persons houses which can be rented to them at rents they can afford to pay.

John M. Gries, Chief of the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce, in response to a similar inquiry a few months ago expressed himself as follows:

It is most common to find relief in houses built for the upper income groups and the large amount of construction during the past two years does seem to have affected the situation favorably in a great many cities in these upper income groups. In some cases, the easing up does seem to have been felt by families in the lower income groups, but this appears to be less usual.

I note that the latest cost of shelter figures by cities issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows 21 increases and only 11 decreases from December 1922 to December 1923. The surveys by the National Association of Real Estate Boards do not indicate any general lowering in rentals and neither do investigations made by one or two of the Federal Reserve Banks.

Since it seems to be true that relief is, as a rule, slowest in reaching the lower income groups, I think it is safe to say that their housing situation has shown but slight improvement, if any, during the past year. It can be stated, nevertheless, that the way to improvement is more nearly in sight than it was a year ago.

When the housing shortage will be made up and when the resumption of the building of houses for the average working-man will take place is a matter of conjecture only. The best judgment seems to be that it will be far in the future.

A recent estimate made by the President of the American Bond and Mortgage Company indicates that 35% of the housing shortage in New York City still remains to be made up, notwithstanding the tremendous building activity in that city during recent years.

### THE COUNTRY'S NEEDS

Babson, last October made an interesting estimate of the housing needs of the country. He said at that time the following:

There are approximately 25,000,000 families in the United States. Of these less than 2,000,000 have incomes of more than \$2,500 a year or more than \$48 a week. On even the most liberal budget \$50 a month rental is the highest which a family living on \$2500 can afford to pay. The major part of the recent building boom, however, has been in houses which cost much more than that. At least 75% of the 170,000 dwellings built during the past 2 years have cost over \$6000, including the land. This means that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the new houses built are within reach of only about 10% of the prospective buyers

and renters. Hence the main problem of the residential building industry today is a matter of price. For each 10% that the cost of a building can be reduced, the field of prospective customers will be increased by 500,000 to 1,000,000 people.

Eventually, building costs will decline under pressure of the law of supply and demand. Some weakening already is taking place. The difficulty from the standpoint of the builder is that price reduction and wage cuts come only after business has fallen off enough to force them.

## THE GOVERNMENT REPORTS ON THE SUBJECT

Two reports issued by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Department of Labor last year have a very important bearing on this situation and mark a departure in the information hitherto available in regard to the building industry. Prior to this time there existed nowhere in the United States official information with regard to the extent of building activities throughout the country. This, however, has now been met by these two Reports; one of which (Report 318) is entitled "Building Permits in the Principal Cities of the United States in 1921," the other (295) is entitled "Building Operations in Representative Cities 1920."

While it is to be regretted that these Reports should deal with facts that are two years old, yet it is encouraging that this important Department of the Federal Government should at last realize the importance of having information of this kind available for the general public.

## FROM THE REALTOR'S POINT OF VIEW

The third semi-annual survey of real estate conditions made by the National Association of Real Estate Boards as of November 1, 1923, indicates a similar situation. This valuable Report, obtained from reports sent in by 241 local Boards to the National Association in answer to a uniform questionnaire, indicates that the shortage of housing accommodations which was large in the country at the end of the war is disappearing and that a state of equilibrium between demand for and supply of housing and business structures is being reached. The report also indicates that the shortage of labor in the building trades is not so acute as it was in 1922, nor as it was for the first six months of 1923; that the greatest demand at this time in the real estate market is for small single-

family dwellings which are being supplied at a very rapid rate, but notwithstanding this the demand at this time outran the supply.

## EFFORTS TO CONTROL EVILS IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY FAIL

Another attempt to create a state Trade Commission having power to prohibit illegal combinations in restraint of trade and stop price fixing on building materials was made in the legislative session of this year at Albany in a bill introduced by Senator Dunnigan of the Bronx.

This measure which was practically identical with a bill introduced a year ago as one of the recommendations of the former Lockwood Legislative Housing Committee of which Samuel Untermyer was counsel, was strongly opposed in the legislature when introduced a year ago.

The renewal of this legislation to control serious evils in the building industry attracted practically no public interest and hardly caused a ripple in legislative circles when introduced this year—possibly due to the fact that this time it did not have behind it the moving force of so dynamic a personality as Samuel Untermyer.

In the meantime the evils of price-fixing go blithely on and no one seems to be making any effort that is likely to produce practical results to stem the rising tide of higher costs of construction. Building materials respond to the increased demand and constantly increase in price. Along with them building labor gets its share and all of it is passed on to the ultimate consumer with the result that prices of construction continue to soar.

## DEMOLITIONS INCREASE PHILADELPHIA'S PROBLEM

"During 1923 about 6,200 persons in Philadelphia were evicted by the demolition of dwellings," says the Philadelphia Housing Association at the completion of a field survey of all demolition permits issued in Philadelphia last year.



Of the 899 buildings torn down, 724 were dwellings which provided accommodations for 988 families, representing 5,845 persons. There were also 25 hotels, lodging and rooming houses with accommodations for 335, bringing the total up to 6,180 persons, or a displacement of almost twice the total population of the 9th Ward, and one and a half times the population of the 6th Ward.

This demolition, if concentrated in one area, would cover a territory two-thirds the size of the 4th Ward, or measured by the actual number of dwellings, almost as many as are now occupied in the 9th Ward. If the people who occupied the dwellings now razed, had been deprived of their homes by a sweeping fire which cleared away the buildings to their foundations, the city would be shocked by the size of the problem of rehousing; it would protest against any suggestion of intensified occupancy such as has taken place in consequence of this past year's demolition, and would readily respond to a programme for rehousing.

Most of the demolitions took place in the older areas, and were it not for the fact that they depleted the housing supply, would undoubtedly be considered beneficial. Thus, for example, 79 of these houses were on blind alleys, courts and back lots, the removal of which is an appreciable reduction of undesirable land congestion. Eleven per cent were houses of multiple occupancy, the removal of which would be a benefit were it not for the fact that failure to provide low rental accommodations for this dehousing population has simply transferred these people to other multiple dwellings, increasing already serious overcrowding.

Sixty-four of the destroyed houses were without sewer connection. Their destruction has reduced the number of unsewered properties in the city.

On the other hand, by far the greater number of dwellings were in good structural condition. Eighty-nine per cent were structurally sound, only 11% were dilapidated. Moreover, 88% of all the demolished dwellings were single-family houses.

#### LOW-RENT PAYING GROUP SUFFERS

Unfortunately, the population deprived of dwellings through these demolitions was largely of the low-rent paying class.

Ninety-two per cent of all destroyed dwellings rented for less than \$50, and 75% rented for less than \$30. No new housing has been provided for this group. The dwelling construction for the past 5 years has all been of higher priced houses. There was only one recourse for these dehoused people. They had to find homes in the already congested areas, not only further increasing insanitary conditions, especially overcrowding, but also having to pay the higher rents charged tenants upon taking up new homes.

### PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS TAKE LARGEST NUMBER

Over 39% of the dwelling demolitions were for public improvements. This includes new school sites, playgrounds, police stations and street extensions. Fourteen and five tenths per cent were for factories, 16.6% for commercial and only 7.6% for housing purposes.

### PREMATURE DEMOLITION

The survey of properties destroyed shows that private enterprise seldom forced vacation of properties prior to the date when new construction was practically ready to begin. Save in a few cases, commercial firms proceeded with their new construction immediately upon the demolition of old buildings. The reverse was true in many instances where the city government demolished structures to make way for public improvements. Street extension as well as public school extension drove families out of houses long before the city was ready to go ahead with the new use.

Less hardship would follow public improvements, if the practices of private firms were adopted, and buildings were not cleared away by the city until plans for the improvements were ready to proceed.

It should be a good principle of government to adopt a plan when making public improvements that will minimize the hardships upon the poor, attendant upon such improvements, especially in times of an emergency, such as now exists in the housing shortage. In the matter of demolishing dwellings, such a plan would suggest continuing occupancy of the houses until new construction is ready to get under way.

The demolition of a large number of houses for the extension of Spring Garden Street, and the approach to the Dela-

ware River Bridge are practical illustrations. These dwellings have been withdrawn from the available supply today, although the destruction of many of them might well have been postponed.

Another conspicuous example is the clearance of an entire block, between Vine and Wood and 18th and 19th Streets to make way for a municipal project. About 2 years ago these houses were vacated on a 60-day notice, although these families might well have occupied the dwellings all this time, and the city might have been collecting the rents.

### CITY PLANNING COMMISSION NEEDED

Undoubtedly the continuance of this practice of clearing sites far in advance of actual need is due to thoughtless oversight, which would not be so apt to occur if a City Planning Commission were created. Aside from unnecessarily depriving the people of their homes, there is a loss to the city in taxes and of interest on funds expended for such clearance, when made prior to actual need of the site.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia.

### DWELLING CONSTRUCTION IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1923

It is a mistaken policy to reckon a city's annual housing gain by the number of dwelling permits issued during the year; for, in Philadelphia on January 1, of this year only 47% of the total number of houses under permit during 1923 were finished and ready for occupancy, or 3855 houses out of 8187.

The field survey of new dwelling construction conducted by the Philadelphia Housing Association shows that the housing shortage is increasing in Philadelphia in spite of the dwelling construction programme for the past 3 years. The number of dwellings completed at the beginning of the year, minus the demolitions for this period, is not affording sufficient accommodations to care for the normal increase in population. Further, the heavy migration of Southern negroes for the past 2 years, is giving Philadelphia an abnormal population growth, and serving to enhance this situation.

About 10% of the total new accommodations that will be provided by plans of the past year will be absorbed by loss through demolitions. A recent study made by the Housing Association showed that approximately 1,000 families were evicted during 1923 by demolition of houses.

### FAVORABLE CONTRAST WITH 1922

While the total number of accommodations under permit in 1923 is 17.66% less than the records of 1922, still there is a favorable aspect of the situation in that provision for multiple occupancy in new construction shows a decrease of 35.5% over 1922. During the past year provision for two-family dwellings dropped 33%, and while permits for tenement and apartment house construction increased 10%, yet the actual number of living accommodations which these will afford, is 35.9% less than those provided in 1922. The total accommodations from the 1923 dwelling programme when completed will care for 9,003 families. The net gain when the demolished houses are subtracted will be 8,015; but this gain is spread over two years construction.

### TRANSIT FACILITIES A FACTOR

The sections with the largest plans for dwelling construction are those where high speed transit lines are proposed or are in effect. The 42nd Ward, comprising Logan, Olney and Oak Lane, which will be affected by the proposed new subway, has the largest number of dwellings under permit—2,427, with an estimated cost of \$13,500,000—indicating that builders are anticipating values which will follow subway extension. Southwest Philadelphia, the 40th Ward, is second, with plans for 940.

Contrary to expectations, the Frankford Elevated has not caused a great building boom in the Northeast. This is probably due to lack of sewer and water extension, which has delayed construction in the areas tapped by the new transit line.

### 12 PER CENT OF NEW HOUSES FOR RENT

A slow up in sales is indicated by the fact that about 12% of the completed houses, which had been held for sale only, were placed in the rental market, at rents varying from \$42 to \$150.



This would indicate that the demand for houses selling from \$7,500 to \$12,000 is slowing up.

Although the selling prices varied from \$4,500 to \$30,000, the bulk of the past year's construction was at a selling price which could be reached by only 10% of the city's population.

A drop in selling prices to from \$3,600 to \$5,500, will reach about 30% of the population, with assurance of a quick turn-over in capital.

At the close of the year, 3,661 one-family brick dwellings were completed, or 47% of the number under permit, and the average of this finished construction was eight and a half months per dwelling.

A field study of the permits issued shows 100% completion for construction under permit in January, 1923, and for each following month there is a gradual reduction in the percentage of completion. With few exceptions, dwellings under permit during the last four months of the year were not completed during 1923.

### REDUCING THE COST OF HOUSES

There was noticeable inactivity during January and December of 1924, although these months were unusually mild. This resulted in added interest charges on capital invested, delayed completion with delayed sales, making the selling prices correspondingly higher. Undoubtedly this practice of suspended work on "operation houses" during the winter season is one of the main reasons for high wages among building trade workers. Until the construction of houses can be lifted out of the "small-lot" class to "mass" production, costs will run high, and delayed completion, with a mid-winter holiday, will continue. Appearances are deceptive as to mass construction. Most building is done in small operations. Thus, during 1923 there were 184 different builders who planned 10 or more houses, and of these, only 5 who built more than 100, with but 1 who had under construction over 400 houses. The second largest operation on the list was 153. About one-third of the builders built between 10 and 30, and only 22 built between 50 and 100 houses.

### POOR OUTLOOK FOR THE RENT PAYER

One of the outstanding needs in the dwelling construction field today is more favorable financing for the builder and the buyer,

with a larger programme on the part of the City for the extension of sewers, water mains, street grading and paving, and the extension of transit lines, high speed subways and elevated, but especially of feeders for such, which will tap the undeveloped areas and bring cheap land nearer, in point of travel time, to the industrial and commercial centers.

It is undoubtedly true that actual mass production, under skilled engineering direction, with economies in the use of materials and in devices to expedite construction, will bring an appreciable reduction of cost, and provide a correspondingly larger market for the sale and purchase of homes. Dwelling construction would profit by the application of "big business" methods. At the present rate of building, there is little prospect of the supply of houses overtaking the demand. The outlook for the rent payers is worse than in 1922.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

### CINCINNATI AROUSED

"The housing situation in Cincinnati is critical. There has never been a time in our experience when we have found the poorer families and the unskilled wage-earners suffering to so great a degree from the difficulty of finding decent housing within their means. We are short 2,000 homes in spite of the large amount of building during the past two years. There has been some relief for people in the higher income groups but none at all for the poorer families. They are actually worse off.

"30,000 families live in 6,500 tenement houses. Their rents are 75% higher. There is more congestion than ever before. The average tenement family lives in 2 rooms, often with 3 and 4 persons to the room. There is more dilapidation, more unsanitary conditions, more occupancy of houses, attics and cellars unfit for human beings to live in. The 3,000 colored people who have come into the city since 1920 are crowded in with other families, adding to the seriousness of the situation.

"Our death rate has increased during the past year. The growing congestion and bad housing have been a factor in causing this increase, because it reduces vitality and resistance to disease. This condition menaces not the tenement dweller alone but all of us.

"The Better Housing League, a civic organization financed by the Community Chest, has been shouldering the burden alone. The situation has now become too serious for any one group to handle. It is time for the public to know the facts and accept the responsibility."

With this statement of the facts in the case the Better Housing League announced that on April 21st a public meeting would be held in which it would make an illustrated presentation of the situation and submit a definite plan of relief.

Following the decision to take this step, the League secured a large auditorium and set about getting the backing of civic organizations. The president of the Chamber of Commerce and the president of the Business Men's Club sent individual letters to all of their members outlining the situation and urging them to attend.

Eight or ten civic luncheon clubs gave their enthusiastic support, as did the leading women's organizations of the city. The four daily newspapers gave generous publicity. Help was received from the Building and Loan Associations. The Superintendent of Schools urged teachers to attend. Invitations and tickets were carried home by several thousand school children. A radio announcement carried the message to hundreds of radio fans.

In spite of the scepticism on the part of many as to the possibility of bringing out the public to such a meeting there was an attendance of 1000 people on a night that marked the breaking of a severe storm, which had the effect of keeping away fully one-half the people who otherwise would have attended. It was a real test.

The meeting opened with entertainment features. Julian A. Pollak, President, presided. The facts were presented in an illustrated address by the Executive Secretary who in conclusion announced the plan of action for which public support was urged.

The meeting was a success from every point of view. In addition to the 1000 people who attended the meeting, 20,000 others were reached by the advance announcements sent out to them in the mail. Other thousands received the message through the newspaper publicity that preceded the meeting as well as the excellent publicity which followed.

The plan of action submitted was under two main heads.

First—Plans for improving existing conditions and

Second—Recommendations for relieving the shortage.

To improve existing conditions the League urged first, that the public increase its contributions to the Community Chest in

order that the League might secure a budget sufficient to employ 15 instead of 6 Visiting Housekeepers and secondly, that the number of housing inspectors in the city's Housing Bureau be increased from 2 to 8.

For the purpose of securing more homes, the Better Housing League endorsed the Cincinnati Model Homes Company and put the responsibility squarely up to the industries of Cincinnati to provide \$500,000, additional capital for the Company, in order that it might continue to build homes to rent to families in the unskilled wage-earner groups.

For the purpose of getting more low-cost houses for prospective home owners in the slightly higher income groups, the League urged builders to devote more attention to the economic planning and construction of the low cost house. The League announced that it would award a prize of \$500 to the Cincinnati builder constructing within the present year, the best house selling for not more than \$5500. Approval was given to Building and Loan Associations of Cincinnati and the public was urged to support them in order that they might have more funds, to loan on homes.

Two recommendations of the League concluded the plan: Wholehearted support for the Zoning Ordinance which was stated to be the most vital step ever taken in the city for the protection of future homes; and finally the sympathetic backing of the public for Mariemont, Cincinnati's Garden Village now under construction, which the League averred would be a great contribution to the housing situation in Cincinnati.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Cincinnati

## CINCINNATI'S PROBLEMS

Of Cincinnati's 415,000 inhabitants, 30% are tenement dwellers and approximately nine-tenths of these live in the "Basin" of the city comprising one-fourth of its area. The buildings located there, originally private residences, have long since been converted into houses sheltering many families each. Prior to 1918, housing efforts were concentrated on this section of the city. As many of these buildings were found to be unsanitary and wholly unsuited for habitation, the Housing Bureau waged a campaign of absolute elimination by condemnation and vacation of the worst types and



drastic enforcement of tenement laws with respect to the remainder. So effective was this work and such remarkable progress resulted therefrom, that Cincinnati until recently ranked among the leading cities of the country in housing betterment.

Cincinnati's minimum housing need is for 1200 homes annually. In 1917, however, home construction was retarded and this slowing up continued through 1920; the end of which found the city some 3200 houses short. In 1921, the annual need only was supplied. Residence construction in 1922, for the first time since 1916, not only met the average annual number of homes necessary but exceeded the figure by 600. Home construction the past year was practically of the same volume as 1922.

At the present time, in common with conditions prevalent in most cities, the failure of the building industry to meet the demand for homes is having its effect upon the housing situation in Cincinnati. This city has witnessed the continual destruction of the cheap multiple-family type of building and the substitution of the one- and two-family dwelling at a cost far in excess of the ability of the poorer class to pay. In addition, the rapid and extensive business expansion in the lower section of the city has further reduced the supply of cheap quarters. In 1922, 132 buildings housing 400 families were torn down, necessitated primarily by the increased demand for business sites.

With no new construction available within their means, the tenement class has had no alternative but to double up and overcrowd the already congested "Basin." Makeshift alterations, subdivision of living rooms, basements and even cellars and overcrowding, are again creating a serious problem. The situation in the negro section especially is intolerable. Restricted more or less to certain locations, dependent upon the white man for most of his living quarters, with very little, if any share of the houses being erected, he is literally being forced into the most filthy and undesirable quarters. Failure to provide for the poorer classes of inhabitants is creating such a deplorable condition of vice, immorality and health as to menace the welfare of the entire city.

The present situation in the building industry is a development of years. The war not only retarded the erection of homes but affected construction in general. Cessation of home

building during the war is but one factor causing the present enormous building programme; many other factors are involved. For instance the suburban movement with its demand for stores, office buildings, churches, banks, schools and other public buildings; the movement from the country to city, this shifting and crowding into the city while not increasing the population, nevertheless, has caused a great demand for alterations.

Add to this the effect of the automobile industry with its garage needs, and limited immigration, and restriction of apprentices in the building trades itself. These unusual changes have and are continuing to affect our building programme as a whole. The large amount of construction necessary for our present day development has maintained high building material prices and left no labor supply to permit the erection of cheaper houses suitable to tenement dwellers, and not until these obstacles are overcome will any relief be obtained, or will construction begin to meet their needs.

Reduction by one-half of the tenement inspection force, owing to lack of funds, is causing a serious slowing up in the progress of housing work. To have this Bureau reduced to 2 inspectors at a time when housing is such a pressing problem is most unfortunate.

A 50% increase in residence construction over annual requirements during the past 2 years inspires the hope that the enormous demand for the higher class residence buildings is becoming satisfied. Although the present rate of construction if continued would require 3 years to overcome Cincinnati's shortage, progress of the kind that means better homes is being made. The model town "Mariemont," on the outskirts of Cincinnati, already under way, with its contemplated erection of 1000 houses; the revision of the traction franchise, to permit quicker, cheaper and better transportation and further extension into cheaper suburban territory; the Zoning ordinance recently enacted, and the revaluation of property to afford financial relief to the municipal government, and again permit an adequate housing inspection force will help to promote and develop a city of real home owners and again place Cincinnati among the leaders in housing progress.

CHARLES SAGMEISTER  
Chief Housing Inspector, Cincinnati.

## CINCINNATI ENQUIRER CAMPAIGNS FOR HOME BUILDING

Displaying a keen interest in the housing shortage from which Cincinnati is still suffering acutely, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* is working on a continuing campaign for home building and home ownership.

The newspaper is using its editorial columns freely for this purpose and has been conducting a series of feature articles showing designs and plans of small homes and giving advice and suggestions to the prospective home builder.

On March 2nd, it carried a special House Building section devoted to articles on the housing situation and to the various problems confronting the man planning to build his own home. The section contained also advertisements by the leading builders and real estate men of the city.

The same issue of the paper included announcement of the publication of a 50-page pamphlet sold for 25 cents, called "Help for the Man Who Wants to Build" which contains small house designs and plans selected from those carried in the Enquirer at various times. The plans and designs are prepared by the Architects Small House Service Bureau of the United States, Inc. In addition to the large number of designs and plans for homes, this very excellent pamphlet contains a series of pertinent articles on such questions as

Best ways to borrow money to build homes  
What you may want to know about building  
Good plans essential in home building  
How to keep down your building cost

and in addition a series of questions and answers relative to puzzling problems the home builder has to contend with. It is probable that it will do a good deal towards helping home building in Cincinnati.

## TAX EXEMPTION IN NEW YORK

The tax exemption law which New York State adopted a few years ago in order to stimulate the construction of new dwellings at a time when the building industry was stagnant,

has been the subject of much criticism. While all critics have agreed that the law has stimulated construction, it has been pointed out from many sources that it has not brought relief to the class of citizens whom it was sought to relieve, viz., the lower paid worker.

As a matter of fact, in the opinion of many it is a nice question whether any relief whatever has been afforded by these statutes. It is claimed that the sole effect of them has been to put additional profits in the hands of builders.

In fact some critics even think that the laws have been a detriment, because of the fact that they have over-stimulated building and have thus brought about an undue demand for building labor and building materials, which in turn have affected prices of building construction, which naturally have responded to an increased demand and have gone up.

The State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning, after a number of hearings on the question of whether the existing law which expired on April 1st, 1924, should be extended or not, finally made a special report to the Governor under date of March 14th, last, strongly recommending that the law should be extended for another year, with a further recommendation that tax exemption should be limited to one-family and two-family houses to be sold for a limited price, and to apartments to be sold for coöperative ownership at a limited price, or for which a limited rental will be charged.

The latter recommendation did not commend itself to the legislature—in fact was not even embodied in a legislative bill—as it raised serious questions of constitutionality. On the basis of discrimination, any such law would probably have been declared to have been void by the courts, if it had been enacted.

Acting on the recommendation of this Commission, Governor Smith sent a special message to the legislature with the result that the legislature promptly passed—without much consideration or debate—a law extending the operation of the existing Tax Exemption Law for one year more, so that the present situation is, that in those cities which have adopted ordinances under the enabling act originally passed in 1920, new buildings whose construction is begun before April 1st, 1925, will be exempt from taxation up to a certain amount of value until January 1st, 1932.



The legislature apparently gave little heed to the serious criticisms which were addressed to the working of the present law; but inasmuch as the act of the legislature is merely an extension of an existing enabling act, the local authorities in New York City, where the tax exemption law has chiefly operated, have full power to so restrict the operation of the ordinance—which they must adopt under the extended power granted them by the legislature—that its benefits will accrue only to those whom it is desired to benefit, and evils which have been found to exist with reference to the previous ordinances may be eliminated.

### DEFECTS OF THE EXISTING EXEMPTION

One of those who has voiced his opposition to the present system of tax exemption is Henry M. Goldfogle, President of the Department of Taxes and Assessments of New York City, who, in the public hearings held by the State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning, pointed out that investigations by his department revealed that profits accruing to owners of tax-exempt houses were as high as 20%, and that rents in tax-exempt houses were higher than in buildings which paid taxes. These views expressed by the public official most concerned were concurred in by other witnesses before the Commission.

The militant organization of tenants which has taken so active a part in the New York rent laws in recent years, went on record as strongly opposed to any continuance of the tax exemption statute. Harry A. Ely, President of that Association, in discussing these laws said:

Personally, I can see no benefit from the tax exemption law as it now stands, so far as the tenant is concerned. The statute was passed to encourage the building of dwelling houses, and it was believed at the time that reasonable rents for persons not able (because of lack of capital) to avail themselves directly of the statute would result. This, however, did not prove to be the case.

### UNTERMYER ON TAX EXEMPTION

Samuel Untermyer who, as counsel for the Lockwood Committee, had chief responsibility for the enactment of the Tax Exemption Law in 1920, as well as for the Rent Laws, has recently expressed himself with great frankness as to the

value of the present Tax Exemption Laws. Discussing this question he has the following to say:

The greatest stimulus to building, apart from the legislation to which I have referred, and which would bring down the cost of building supplies at least 30%, will come from an intelligent Tax Exemption law, which should be just as unlike the present ordinance as anything could be. The present ordinance has unquestionably stimulated building, but it has done so in the interest of the landlord rather than that of the tenant, and it is insufficient.

Under a Tax Exemption law such as I have urged, every building would be taxed as though there were no exemption. An owner claiming exemption would have to apply for it year by year, and would receive a complete exemption for that year on showing that the actual rental received from the house in question did not amount to more than—say \$10 per room per month, whether it be a one- or two-family house or a tenement. Where the one- and two- family dwellings are sold, the exemption should apply only to those that are erected within a given cost and which could therefore be rented within the prescribed limitation.

This exemption should continue for 10 years, provided the owner can show, year by year, that his rooms are being rented within the prescribed limit. In that way we would draw away the building operations from the higher-priced houses and apartments to those that are needed.

## GOVERNMENT HOUSING PROPOSED FOR NEW YORK

All thoughtful students of the housing situation have expected for some time that an effort would be made to have American communities follow the example of Europe and embark upon the doubtful experiment of Government Housing. As was to be expected, the first concerted effort of this kind has come from New York where conditions in New York City with its vast number of tenants and few home owners, and its overwhelmingly foreign population would naturally lend itself to effort of this kind.

The State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning in its Report submitted to the Governor and to the legislature at the close of the year said:

In the Commission's preliminary investigation several fundamental difficulties in the solution of the housing problem have developed. One of these is the absence of sufficient capital at a low rate of interest for housing purposes. If enough private capital cannot be made available for these purposes, the deficiency will have to be met by resorting to the use of public credits.

The State should be placed in the position to extend its credit for housing throughout the state through the State Land Bank and other agencies, under wise regulation. To make this possible a constitutional amendment is necessary. It requires at least 3 years to secure a constitutional amendment and for this reason the Commission recommends that steps be taken to that end at the present session of the legislature.

At the same time cities should be freed from restrictions which might prevent them from undertaking their own solution of the housing problem by means of the use of municipal credits and undertakings devised by themselves.

Following this recommendation, bills were introduced in the legislature providing for amendments to the Constitution along the lines of the recommendations made in this report.

Although the State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning at first disclaimed responsibility for these measures, there was little doubt in the minds of persons attending the legislative session that the chief support of these measures came from this source, and primarily from the support lent to the scheme by the great authority and weight of the Governor's name.

Although these proposals were strongly opposed before the Senate Committee which had them under consideration—and supported before that committee by clamorous tenants' organizations from New York City—the Senate passed the measures by a party vote. The Assembly, which was of an opposite political complexion, saw to it that the bills were not favorably considered by that house. In other words, there was a stale-mate.

It is thus seen that, so far, these proposals have not gotten beyond the stage of a political gesture. For, it was quite evident that the measures were being advocated at this time partly because of the socialistic leanings of the State Commission on Housing, or some of its members, and the evident belief on the part of the Governor that the advocacy of such a measure would be good political capital, which led the political party in sympathy with the administration to pass the measure by a party vote.

Little consideration was given by the legislature to the fundamental questions involved in this proposal. Certainly no consideration was given to its effect upon the credit of the municipalities of the state, and what it would do to their

securities, if the protection now afforded by the Constitution as to the issuance of bonds and other evidences of indebtedness by municipalities throughout the state, were to be withdrawn and a wide-open regime permitted.

The State Association of Real Estate Boards guided by its Executive Secretary Meade C. Dobson and supported by individual realtors and representatives of financial interests, deserves great credit for having led the opposition to this proposal and having effectively defeated it in the Assembly.

At the hearing before the Senate Committee among others who pointed out the objections to Government Housing was Lawrence Veiller who set before the legislature the results of the English experiments in this field and pointed out the great financial burdens that had already resulted from the Government's thus embarking in the field of private enterprise.

#### UNTERMYER'S VIEWS

Discussing these proposals Samuel Untermyer had the following to say :

State and municipal aid will, I fear, do more harm than good in their effect upon our present deplorable situation, because of the delay and the intermediate paralysis of private enterprise. Admittedly it would require a constitutional amendment permitting that form of aid,—which means that the Amendment must pass the legislatures of 1924 and 1925; and it would then be voted upon by the people in November 1925. The legislature of 1926 would then have to pass the necessary legislation. So that it would be from two to three years before operations could begin, and probably another two years at best before we could commence to experience the slightest relief from that source.

The political corruption and favoritism that would stalk in the wake of such a programme may well be conceived. But apart from that consideration, let us consider for a moment what would happen meantime. No builder in his senses would be likely to embark upon the construction of the character of houses that we need as a business enterprise, with the knowledge that he would have to face the competition of rentals under municipal construction. The future would be too uncertain. The added congestion that would occur during this period would put the problem beyond the hope of solution.

To my mind the experiment is so perilous as to make it unthinkable.



## FUNDS FOR HOUSING

One outcome of the proposal for Government Aid to Housing in New York has been the study made by the State Association of Real Estate Boards as to the lack of adequate financial facilities for housing in that state. As a result of a thorough inquiry made under the direction of President A. L. Kinsey and Chairman Max Morgenthau, Jr., of the Association's Committee on Home Financing, the Association reached the conclusion that state-aid to housing is in no sense needed, but that there should be a much greater utilization of the Building and Loan Associations of the state as a means of stimulating and developing home construction.

An important adjunct in their opinion in this connection is the State Land Bank established in 1915, but never as fully utilized as was contemplated by its founders.

This important state institution was organized 10 years ago to act as a clearing house for Savings and Loan Associations. Its stockholders are not individuals but Savings and Loan Associations. For each share of \$1,000 they may get advances from the Land Bank to the extent of \$20,000 and for security they deposit \$25,000 in mortgages together with collections they make on the mortgages which are amortized ones. Advances of \$25,000 are made by depositing \$28,000 in securities &c. These mortgages are then placed behind the 5% bonds issued by the State Land Bank.

According to David B. Hutton, Managing Director of the State Land Bank, its bonds are legal investments for savings banks, trustees and sinking funds, they pay 5% interest and are free from the state income tax.

Mr. Hutton says that every dollar thus invested is put out on long-time amortized home mortgages through Savings and Loan Associations. He adds that sinking funds of the state to the extent of approximately \$1,725,000 have been invested in State Land Bank bonds and this money has been distributed in a state-wide manner on home loans. It is expected that during the current year the State Comptroller will take another \$1,000,000 of Land Bank bonds.

Starting with the State Land Bank and the Savings and Loans Associations as their foundation, the State Association

of Real Estate Boards has embarked upon an energetic and organized campaign to bring home to the realtors of the state, as well as to the financial institutions throughout the state, the desirability of utilizing these two agencies as a means of stimulating home building and investment in homes. In a report of a special committee of this Association made recently, it is stated that:

Savings banks in this state may now loan up to 70% of their assets on mortgages. The savings banks of New York do not, however, loan on the average more than 52% of their assets on mortgages, and a large part of this percentage is loaned upon mortgages on other structures than homes. Some of the savings banks, however, notably those in Albany and Utica, have loaned freely on individual homes and thus aided the local housing situations generously. The Savings Bank of Utica, also has adopted a plan of amortized loans, and has co-operated with the local trust companies and the real estate board in meeting the home-financing requirements of its city.

On the other hand, it was found that many of the savings banks are not doing their part in aiding home-buyers and home-builders to finance their undertakings. Rather than to make numerous small loans, those banks prefer one large loan on a commercial structure. They overlook the fact that, not being organized for profit, they should be of the greatest possible service to their home communities.

In order to secure the complete co-operation of the savings banks in supplying needed home-mortgage funds, we recommend that special conferences be arranged between the State Bureau of Housing and the various regional groups of the State Association of Savings Banks, and that publicity be given to these conferences and the results thereof.

We believe that a frank, public discussion of the part savings banks must take in the home-financing problem will result in the awakening of many savings banks to their public duty with respect to the housing shortage, and that many millions of dollars thereby will be made available for home-loans on terms acceptable to many thousands of home-buyers. We believe also that these savings banks which have been alive to the home-financing needs will be even more co-operative, and continue to extend their services and funds to relieve the housing shortage in greater measure.

Building, or Savings and Loan Associations devote 90% of their assets to loans upon individual homes on long-term easy payments, and thus offer an ideal financing medium to those desiring low-priced homes. These associations are under the supervision of the State Banking Department, and are highly commended by the State Superintendent of Banks. There are 296 such Associations in the state of New York, nearly twice as many as there are savings banks. Therefore, to make more mortgage money available on the building

and loan plan, it is not so much a question of organizing new Associations as that of increasing investments in building and loan shares.

Insofar as the cost of financing housing enterprises is a factor in the present housing shortage it would seem that the measures proposed by the State Association of Real Estate Boards would prove an important element in aiding the situation.

But the cost of financing is only one element in that situation and to most observers a comparatively inappreciable element compared with the cost of building materials and building labor.

That savings banks are not unmindful of their responsibilities in this respect is evidenced by a recent report of the Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank of New York. As announced by its President John J. Pulleyn, in the effort to help relieve the housing shortage and meet the constantly growing demand for small homes, the bank has inaugurated a plan whereby persons of small incomes may purchase savings bank aid. Under this plan the Emigrant Bank has made a loan of \$1,000,000 to finance 400 new homes in Brooklyn. These are one-family houses costing less than \$5,000 each which the bank has financed with an initial loan to the amount of \$1,000,000. Discussing this scheme Mr. Pulleyn says:

We believe that the utilization of savings bank funds in this noteworthy direction actually represents the investment of the public's money in a way that will directly benefit great masses of the people.

Purchase of the homes under the arrangement with the Emigrant Bank is worked out as a part of the savings account of depositors. Payments can be made \$1,000 down and \$25 monthly. In instances where the prospective purchaser is not in a position to make the initial payment, the bank is prepared to render assistance, so that through systematic saving purchasers may ultimately obtain title to their homes.

All houses are to be built in the so-called semi-detached style, the plan calling for seven rooms and bath, comprising dining room, living room, sun parlor and kitchen on the first floor, with three bedrooms and a modern bathroom on the second. All are to be lighted with electricity throughout and equipped with a gas water heater and stove and a pipeless furnace. The price will include all fittings and decorations, the houses to be ready for occupancy when sold.

A sample house will be ready in a very short time from which orders will be placed, a small deposit securing the choice of locations. Needless to say, the profit on each individual house will be small, and it is only by buying the materials in such enormous quantities that the builders expect to attain a reasonable profit.



## A NEW LIMITED-DIVIDEND HOUSING COMPANY

In the belief that large limited-dividend companies offer a method for immediate help in the housing situation, a group of men and women in New York City has organized such a company, capitalized at \$2,000,000 with dividends limited to 6%.

The fact that America has lagged so far behind Europe in extending government-aid to housing might have led us to expect that at least in the field of limited-dividend companies we would have been more active than they have been in European countries. As a matter of fact, however, this has not been the case. In this respect also the progress made in America has been insignificant as compared with what has been done abroad. The City and Suburban Homes Company is the only large limited-dividend company which has been organized in America. As readers of this magazine know this company has had a most successful career. Its operations have consisted mainly in the erection of large groups of tenement houses on Manhattan Island. These have been maintained in splendid condition and have been rented at very moderate prices. In the recent crisis when rents were in many cases increased far beyond the capacity of the tenant to pay, thousands of tenement families in New York City had good reason to be grateful to the City and Suburban Homes Company.

There have also been a few smaller limited-dividend companies, practically all of which have confined their efforts to tenement house construction and management. They have all made their contributions so far as their resources would permit to the alleviation of a desperate situation.

The time seems ripe, however, for a general extension of the limited-dividend movement. Hence the organization of the City Housing Corporation. This Company does not, however, intend to build tenements on Manhattan Island. Land values there have become so high that it seems wiser for the present, at least, to develop unsettled parts of the city.

The Company will confine its operations to comparatively low priced land. It proposes to buy large, well located but undeveloped tracts on the outskirts of the city, and to get the benefits of large-scale land development as well as large-scale



construction. Buildings will be sold, not rented, and the assets of the Company will thus remain liquid, to be constantly reinvested. When the financial strength of the Company warrants, it is hoped to build an entire community somewhat along the lines of the English Garden Cities of Letchworth and Welwyn, with such modifications of town plan, selling methods, etc. as the difference between English and American conditions demand.

As the first operation the Company has selected a tract of 1050 lots in Long Island City near the Bliss Street Station of the Interborough and of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Railroads. The property commences a few hundred feet from the Queens Boulevard, an important thoroughfare 200 feet wide, on which the transit lines are located. The property is about 20 minutes from 42nd Street with a 5-cent fare to practically all parts of the city. Within 10-minutes walking distance are factories employing a great many thousand men and women.

It is proposed to develop this tract with 1- and 2-family houses containing apartments of 4, 5 and 6 rooms. There will also be some 6-family tenements. The erection of the first group is now under way consisting of about 65 houses of the various kinds enumerated. The plans for the houses have been prepared by Clarence S. Stein of New York, architect, and Henry Wright of St. Louis, was associated with him on the arrangement and grouping of the buildings. All of the houses will be built of brick, attractively grouped, with liberal set-backs and yards. In no case do the buildings cover more than 30% of the lot or exceed 3 stories in height; nor are they in any case more than 2 rooms deep. They will be sold on easy terms with cash payments of from 12% to 15% of the purchase price, the balance on first and second mortgages. The latter will be payable in monthly installments covering a period of about 12 years. Advantage has been taken of the tax exemption law so that the building of the 1- and 2-family houses will be entirely tax exempt until 1932. Under the present law, tax exemption is limited to \$15,000 for a single building. The 6-family houses will, therefore, be partly but not entirely tax exempt.

Unfortunately construction costs are still very high indeed and this is a substantial handicap that any housing developing at the present time must face. The land has been purchased at very low prices, considering its favorable location, and every effort has been made to keep down the cost of the houses to a price as reasonable

as is possible, consistent with good construction and with some regard for the appearance of the block.

The selling prices of the 2-family houses will in most cases be between \$11,000. and \$12,000. and the plan works out in such a manner that the monthly cost to the occupants will be between \$8 and \$8.50 per room to cover taxes, interest and amortization of first and second mortgages, insurance and water. This still leaves as an additional expense the items of repairs and heating.

An effort is being made to confine the sale of one of the first groups of houses to co-operative purchasers. The Co-Operative League and the United Neighborhood Houses of New York are giving very valuable co-operation to the City Housing Corporation in developing this feature of the undertaking. Together they are organizing co-operative associations which are expected to take over groups of houses as they are completed. It is realized that co-operative ownership of houses of this kind is more or less experimental and the City Housing Corporation has, therefore, limited the number of houses which will be sold co-operatively until the success of the plan has been demonstrated. It is believed, however, that this feature of the undertaking will be a most valuable one and will be continued in other cases after the success of the initial experiment has been demonstrated.

The Directorate of the Company has not been entirely completed. It consists to date as follows: Dr. Felix Adler, John G. Agar, Leo S. Bing, Alexander M. Bing, Thomas C. Desmond, Prof. Richard T. Ely, Frank Lord, John Martin, Herbert Parsons, Mrs. Joseph M. Proskauer and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The task of supplying houses at prices within the purchasing power of the masses of our population is a very difficult one indeed. Large scale operations on a limited-dividend basis offer one of the means by which good houses can be furnished, at prices which the better paid workers at least can afford to pay. The size of the enterprise is one of the factors determining the economies which can be effected. To function efficiently a housing corporation should have a large amount of capital at its disposal. Land can be bought cheapest when bought in large undeveloped tracts. Construction work can be carried on most economically when many, rather than few, houses are built. The incidental benefits such as the land increment accruing to business sites in a new de-

velopment are proportionately greater in large scale than in small housing enterprises. The City Housing Company realizes that its future usefulness is going to depend in part at least upon its ability to command considerable amount of capital. It is, therefore, appealing to the public to buy its stock. This stock, the writer believes, to be a safe business investment—at the same time one which will contribute to the solution of what many social workers believe to be our most pressing social problem.

Housing companies of this kind are socialized business at 6%. With proper management they should be absolutely safe investments offering to each member of the public an opportunity to make a very real contribution toward the building of better homes and better communities.

ALEXANDER M. BING  
New York.

## APARTMENTS AT NINE DOLLARS A ROOM

The great experiment in housing undertaken by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of New York is now reaching culmination. Haley Fiske, the President of that company, in a recent article states that "before six months of the year 1924 have passed into history 2200 families in Greater New York will have definitely eluded the grasp of the high-rent ogre and will be definitely settled in apartments erected for the sole purpose of relieving the housing shortage and lightening the burden of the wage earner."

This important housing development consists of 54 different buildings each containing 39 apartments with a total of about 9,000 rooms. Seven and one-half million dollars has been invested in the buildings, and through it the company hopes to prove according to Mr. Fiske that, where land values do not exceed \$125 per front foot and where large operations are undertaken in order to obtain the advantages of quantity production, such houses can be built and rented at \$9 per room per month, provided the owners of the houses will be satisfied with a gross return of from 8% to 9%.

One of the features of this scheme that is worthy of note is the decision of those responsible to provide chiefly 4-room apartments. It is believed that this is of considerable impor-



tance, as it offsets the tendency which has developed rapidly in recent years to a low standard of an insufficient number of rooms. In order, however, to meet the fluctuating needs of a group of dwellings of this kind, there are, of course, some larger and some smaller apartments provided.

Under the law by which the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company was permitted to use its assets for a housing development of this kind, the rent to be charged is definitely limited to a sum not to exceed \$9 per room, per month. That the development is likely to be a success there can be no doubt, especially if the Metropolitan keeps control of the enterprise and sees to it that it is wisely managed. There is every indication that this is to be their policy; for it has already been announced that a specialist on home economics is to be a feature of the staff, so that those tenants who wish advice as to the best way in which to use their income most advantageously—not merely from the housing point of view but from the point of view of food as well as shelter—will be aided.

It is interesting to note that all the rooms had been applied for more than 6 months ago. At that time the Company had received thousands of requests and no further applications can be considered today.

Speaking of this experiment, one of the officials of the Metropolitan had the following to say:

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has undertaken to blaze the trail and to show the way to any others who may be actuated by the same altruistic and unselfish motives. There now exists a desperate need for such housing and it is hoped that the Metropolitan houses will stand as an example to other institutions anxious to serve an outstanding public need.

Scores of New York families beset for years by the inconveniences caused by the housing shortage, have begun to move into these model apartments erected by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

There are approximately 2150 separate apartments in the three great building operations and they have been declared by experts to be the last word in proper ventilation, sanitation and comfort. The most popular feature of it all is the fact that the Metropolitan is renting them at not to exceed \$9 per room, per month, insisting that it is possible to do this and earn sufficient interest on the investment.

Interesting statistics are offered as to the great quantity of building materials used in an enterprise of this kind. It is stated that



32,000,000 brick were employed and that the steel and iron involved weighed 2585 tons. The total amount of lumber used, not including the flooring, was 22,600,000 linear feet, or about 4280 miles of lumber.

Among the special features of these new multiple dwellings may be noted the following: heat and hot water from central plants and electric lighting fixtures in each room; an overhead clothes dryer in each kitchen; and in some cases a Pullman dining bay instead of a larger dining room. For the Pullman dining bay a charge of only \$6.75 a month is made instead of the full price of a full room. The Company expects eventually to plant trees and shrubbery in front of the apartments and in the open court spaces in the rear.

Altogether the student of housing reform will watch this experiment with very great interest.

In addition to thus giving a very practical object lesson of how the funds of a great corporation like this can be advantageously used in the construction of housing urgently needed, it is not without significance that at the same time the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company through its real estate department made it possible to provide living accommodations for 18,000 families or approximately 90,000 persons who would have otherwise suffered great inconvenience through the housing shortage. This was through loans made on dwellings and apartments during the year throughout the country amounting in all to \$58,874,351. The average rate of interest on these mortgage investments was 5.78%. It is stated that the Metropolitan in 1923 increased its investments of this kind, after deducting those paid, to the sum of \$605,922,000, an increase of 18.78% over the previous year.

## THE CHASE FAMILY HOME ASSOCIATION

Edward M. Chase, a merchant of Manchester, organized February 22, 1924 an Association having as its purpose "the building of houses designed for one family only and selling the same without profit to persons having a family of not less than two children", and which "for the promotion of its charitable objects may buy, hold, improve, sell and manage such real and personal property as may be deemed necessary in carrying on its work".

Mr. Chase has provided a \$50,000 fund for the organization and \$50,000 additional of borrowed capital is to be secured. The

whole amount is to be utilized in building 30 single-family houses on lots not less than 50 by 100 feet. The houses are to be sold by weekly payments to citizens of the United States or persons who have taken out their citizen papers. They are to be sold only to those with families of at least two children and to persons who are members of some religious organization and are recommended by the clergyman of his church. The houses will be sold for payments of \$7.50 per week extending over 17 years.

B. R. ANDREWS  
New York

## CO-OPERATIVE APARTMENTS

The movement for co-operative apartments which has spread so rapidly throughout New York City—due partly to the fact that the unsettled situation in the building trades, had made the former speculative builder unwilling to hazard his fortunes by erecting an expensive apartment without being sure of his tenants—shows great signs of activity, with every indication that the movement is one that has come to stay, and one that will be the chief means of development of the apartment house, not only in great centers like New York but throughout the country. Already signs are evident that other communities than New York are taking to this new form of development.

As illustrative of this widespread interest in the subject, the Co-operative Apartment Association of Chicago has prepared a 20-page pamphlet dealing with the whole question. The pamphlet shows how the principle of home ownership is applied to the financing of apartment construction, the organization of a tenant-owned apartment and its plan of operation, the arrangement for managing its affairs, the elimination of waste which the tenant-ownership plan makes possible and the possibility of resale of individual apartments. It also details something of the history of co-operative home ownership in European countries and in the United States.

## THE REALTOR AS HOUSING REFORMER

There is probably no individual in the United States who has greater opportunity for participation in the movement for housing reform than the average realtor.

That the organized realtors of the country recognize this opportunity and responsibility has been evidenced over and over again through the activities and efforts of the National Association of Real Estate Boards which gives a new proof of its great interest in the various phases of the housing question by the extent to which those questions are to be discussed at its great national Convention to be held in Washington June 3-6.

Among these subjects will be the very live topic of "Co-operatively Owned Apartment Buildings." It is expected that all phases of this important question will be discussed. The "Stimulating of Home Ownership Through Making Loans More Readily Available" and the "Financing of Second Mortgages" are other topics. "New Methods Being Developed by Banks, Insurance Companies and Other Great Investment Institutions in the Handling of First Mortgages" will be brought to the attention of realtors through a national survey of new mortgage practices now being conducted by the Association. A symposium on the "Financing of Home Buying by Extending Payments Over a Long Term" will figure prominently in the discussions at one of the Divisions, and Canadian as well as American practice will be reported on.

Another most important and interesting discussion will be that in the Sub-dividers Division where one of the topics is to be a scheme of "Selling Home Lots Provided with Golf Course Annexes." As stated in an announcement issued by the Association:

The man who buys a lot in the newest type of suburban subdivision buys at the same time a golf course for himself, a tea house for his wife's afternoon recreation hour, tennis courts, stables, or perchance a trap-shooting gallery for his tam-o'shanter daughter and her college brother, and protected sand piles and play grounds for the family's littlest citizens. His home brings with it not only a share in the enjoyment of the subdivision's parkways and landscaping but a share in its community-owned recreation facilities as well. How such subdivisions with "community features" have proven their possibilities, notably in Cleveland, Kansas City, Buffalo and some sections of New York, will be told at the convention's round-table by the men who are carrying out their development.

The medium priced house which means home to the average suburban family, and practical methods for building it come side by side with the subdivision de-luxe on the convention's programme.

Home builders and subdividers known nationally for their work in city-building will give their experiences in locating, planning and improving new suburban tracts, in establishing building restrictions

to preserve their residential standards, and in providing for the maintenance of drainage, lights, pavements, parkways and landscaping.

Other novel features of this meeting will be a discussion of the scheme by which a new form of lease has been devised that will show the rentpayer his share of the tax bill, thus awakening the renter to the actuality of his own part in paying the taxes which the city levies on real estate.

A national survey of rents of residential properties showing the actual prices now being paid in leading American cities in high-class, medium price and low price dwellings and apartment buildings will be discussed as the opening topic of one of the sessions. The results of this survey have recently been announced in a summary statement issued by the National Association.

Finally, an important participation in civic work is announced through the movement launched by the Association for its cleaning up of the unsightly "back yards of cities" with the bad impression which such districts make upon travelers passing through such cities, as they get their impression of that city from the railroad right of way.

The furthering of a plan for eliminating objectionable rubbish from the great industrial tracts of cities as these tracts are traversed by passenger-carrying lines will be made a feature of the Convention.

Industrial commissioners of all railroads in the country, it is stated will cooperate with the industrial realtors in this "clean-up" campaign, and commercial associations and civic organizations will be asked to take an active part in making the right-of-way outlook represent their cities fairly to the travelling public.

It is thus seen that the forthcoming Convention promises to be the most important one which this Association has ever held, notwithstanding the very valuable meetings of past years.

It is also quite evident that the National Association of Real Estate Boards is coming to be one of the leading and most important civic organizations in the United States. Not only will all realtors find it profitable to attend the Washington Convention, but all persons interested in Housing, City Planning and Civic Betterment will find it a most profitable occasion.



## HOW TO FURNISH THE SMALL HOME

One element in making a house a home is the matter of furnishings. In order that home-makers and committees in charge of local demonstrations of "Better Homes" may have guidance of specialists in this undertaking, *Better Homes in America* has prepared a 32-page booklet on "How to Furnish the Small Home", written by Mrs. Charles Bradley Sanders, and distributed to teachers of home economics and to the 800 Committees all over the nation which conducted "better homes" demonstrations during the week set aside for that purpose—May 11 to 18. Copies of the booklet (No. 3) can be secured for 25 cents by writing to Better Homes in America, 1653 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.

Four distinct problems must be faced in furnishing the small home, according to Mrs. Sanders:—

First, The furnishings must suit the house in size, coloring and style;

Second, The pieces must be harmonious with one another and be well made and comfortable;

Third, They must suit the requirements of the family;

Fourth, They must fit the family purse.

For the rooms of the small house the best backgrounds are stated to be flat-tone paints, tints, wallpapers, and commercial wall oilcloths in a cloudy, "all-over" pattern. For a room with a northern exposure, yellow, ranging from cream to a deep pumpkin color, is found best. For rooms facing south, colors ranging from light gray to a deep putty color are recommended in the booklet.

Oak, maple, birch or beech it is stated make more durable and better floors than the soft woods, which in many cases are designed to be covered completely, although they may be finished with paint or stain successfully.

### FLOOR COVERINGS

The subject of floor coverings naturally is touched upon only lightly, as whole books could be written on this subject. For the general guidance of home-makers and of chairmen of "Better Homes" demonstrations, however, the booklet by Mrs. Sanders points out that floor coverings should be several shades darker

than the walls, and should be in plain colors where the walls have figured coverings, or an "all-over" design if the wall covering is plain.

Woodwork is an important item, the pamphlet points out. If the coloring of the walls is light—either paint or wallpaper—painting the wood trim white, cream, or ivory creates harmony. Light walls and dark woodwork usually do not combine well, but the dark trim may be used in rooms where the furniture is of walnut or dark mahogany. Dark oak furniture justifies trim of the same tone.

## WALLS

The wall coverings and the direction the room faces determine the proper curtains and draperies to use. If plain wall coverings are used, figured or striped hangings may be used and, conversely, if the wall covering is figured, plain hangings are best to use. North windows should be curtained with cheerful, light fabrics; but for south windows, cool, sombre tones for the curtain should be selected.

Avoidance of anything that is elaborate is stressed as a good rule in selecting furniture. A piece of furniture that stands out in a shop will stand out much more in a room. Long, low rooms should not have high, narrow pieces of furniture, nor should broad, short pieces of furniture go into high, narrow rooms. Fragile, slender furniture is entirely out of place in rooms with heavy woodwork or beamed ceilings.

The first thing to remember in selecting and hanging pictures for the home, the booklet says, is to be sure that the pictures suit the room for which they are intended. Decision upon pictures can well be left until everything else is provided in the home. However, a few general rules are laid down. For instance, never hang an oil painting next to an etching, nor a Japanese print next to a family portrait or sampler, nor a delicate water color next to a silhouette. These types of pictures should be grouped or, if possible, hung in separate rooms.

## PICTURES

Certain types of pictures are suited for specific rooms of the home. For the living room, the booklet suggests water colors, oil paintings, etchings, engravings, colored or sepia prints of any of

the famous old masters as most suitable. For the dining room and for halls, landscapes and architectural paintings are deemed most in keeping with the dignity of these parts of the home, and in some houses the same sort of pictures may be suitable for the living room. Sometimes, for the sake of restfulness and simplicity, it is best to dispense with pictures altogether.

Old costume prints, photographs, and pictures of the most intimate sort may be hung in family bedrooms, but for guest rooms, prints of subjects of general interest or small water colors should be selected. For the nursery or child's bedroom, the pictures should be carefully selected with reference to the age of the child who will occupy it, as pictures make a more lasting impression on the young mind than any other furnishings of its bedroom.

Lamps and lighting fixtures of all kinds are an important item in furnishing the home. Placing and shading lamps properly needs real thought, as the double purpose of lighting the room and of looking well in it must be served by the lamp or fixtures. As elaborate lamp and shade are entirely out of place in a room simply furnished otherwise.

A few bits of brass, copper, or colored pottery are all that are needed to strike a lively note in a room. A large jar on a small table, or small ornaments on a large table, are inappropriate. It is a good rule to remember, the booklet points out, that ornaments decrease in value as they increase in number.

## Books

No home without books can qualify as a "better home". Bookshelves and bookcases should be in harmony with the other features of the room in which they are placed, and should be under windows, beside doors, and in various recesses and otherwise empty spaces so that they will add to the charm of the rooms. Particular attention should be paid to children's books. If there is a nursery, the children's books should be there. Real love for the right kind of books developed in the child brings real happiness throughout life. Common interest in good books, comfortable chairs and the right sort of reading lights will go a long way toward making any home attractive.

Too often the furnishings of American homes include an accumulation of uncomfortable, ugly or meaningless objects which had better be eliminated. This applies particularly to hangings, pic-

tures and ornaments, and often to furniture and rugs. Above all, it should be remembered that the purpose of the house is to serve as the home for a growing family. It should then provide not only convenience for the kitchen and laundry activities, but comfort, rest and inspiration for the leisure hours. Essential considerations for the bedrooms are provision for sound, wholesome sleep, abundant fresh air, and privacy; for the dining room, cheerfulness; for the living room, happiness and comfort.

Since the Better Homes movement was launched a few months ago under the executive direction of James Ford, it has shown a very great period of activity culminating in "Better Homes Week" which has recently passed.

In addition to the booklet above referred to (No. 3), the movement has also published the following pamphlets "Why and How to Teach Civic Effectiveness as Illustrated by School Participation in the Community Better Homes Campaign" (No. 2); "Better Homes in America", a plan book of small homes prepared by the Small House Service Bureau and containing plans and illustrations of typical small houses of 3, 4, 5 and 6 rooms (No. 4).

The latest publication is one entitled "Home Music and Home Play" issued very recently (No. 6). Copies of all of these pamphlets and further information on the work of the organization can be obtained from Washington headquarters, 1653 Pennsylvania Avenue.

## SUMMER SCHOOLS ON PUBLIC HEALTH

The Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. H. S. Cumming, has recently announced the establishment of a series of summer schools on Public Health that have been organized in connection with the extension work of the following Universities: Columbia, Universities of California, Michigan and Iowa. These schools will all be conducted this summer with the co-operation of the U. S. Public Health Service. That at the University of Iowa will be from June 9th to July 18th; at the University of California, Berkeley, from June 23rd to August 2nd; at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, from June 23rd to August 2nd and at Columbia University from July 7th to August 15th.

The faculties of these various summer schools will include many leading specialists in the United States. Among those announced are Michael M. Davis on dispensary management; Robert H.



Gault on criminal psychiatry; Emery Hayhurst on industrial hygiene; William J. Mayo, non-communicable diseases; E. V. McCollum and H. C. Sherman, nutrition; William H. Park, laboratory methods; Earl B. Phelps and George C. Whipple, public health engineering; M. J. Rosenau and Victor C. Vaughan, epidemiology; Thomas W. Salmon, psychotherapy; John H. Stokes, syphilis; Philip Van Ingen, child hygiene; C. E. A. Winslow, public health administration and Francis Carter Wood, cancer.

It is thus seen that an unusual opportunity is afforded to persons interested in the question of public health to acquire a first-hand knowledge of the essence of public health principles which it might take years to acquire in any other way. The tuition fees in these various schools, it is stated will be moderate, ranging probably from \$25 to \$54 for the entire summer school depending on the University and the number of courses selected.

The U. S. Public Health Service is to be congratulated on this practical and far reaching educational experiment which will do much to advance the cause of public health.

## DEATH OF NELSON P. LEWIS

The cause of City Planning and of civic progress generally, has lost a leader and friend in the death of Nelson P. Lewis at his home in Brooklyn the latter part of March.

Mr. Lewis occupied a unique position in public affairs in New York City as well as throughout the country. For 18 years he occupied the important position of Chief Engineer to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, New York's real governing body, and held that position through all the various political administrations that were in power during that period. A diplomatist might with complacency consider it a real achievement of diplomacy to have occupied so difficult a position under such circumstances—and Mr. Lewis was a real diplomat.

He possessed to a rare degree personal qualities which made it possible for him to achieve the success that he secured in his difficult position. No administration felt that it could get along without Nelson P. Lewis, and at one time when the city was threatened with the loss of his services through an opportunity in private professional practice which came to him, it is significant and interesting to learn that the City of New York by unanimous

consent immediately increased his salary to a very large amount in order to make sure that the city did not lose his services, paying Mr. Lewis then a salary equal, if not greater, than the highest salary paid to any one in the city's employ.

As a leader in the City Planning movement, Mr. Lewis will be sadly missed. His book on "City Planning", his service as President of the National City Planning Conference, his active service on the Board of Directors of that body and of the American City Planning Institute, his leadership in the work of the Regional Plan of New York—all were large contributions to the science and are of better city building.

Those who had the good fortune to be associated with him in his work will miss greatly his genial spirit and his fairminded attitude toward all with whom he dealt.

## RECENT COURT DECISIONS ON ZONING

While there have not been as many decisions handed down by the courts recently as noted in our last issue, the courts still go on construing Zoning laws—some upholding them, others declaring them to be invalid. A number of interesting decisions have been handed down recently. Among these may be noted the following:

### THE EUCLID VILLAGE CASE

What promises to be an important test case because of the fact that the decision was rendered by the U. S. District Court and will therefore be appealed ultimately to the United States Supreme Court, is the decision of Judge Westenhaver of the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, holding that the Euclid Village Zoning Ordinance is void and in violation of the Constitution of the United States.

The decision in this case seems to hinge upon the view of the court that the whole effort to classify and restrict the territory in the 16 square miles of area comprised within the village is unreasonable and the taking of private property without compensation. In handing down the final decree Judge Westenhaver has the following to say:

These ordinances are in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and void as applied to the plaintiff's property described in the bill herein, in that said ordinances take the plaintiff's

property without just compensation, are not a constitutional or reasonable exercise of the police power, deprive the plaintiff of its property without due process of law, and otherwise deprive plaintiff of rights guaranteed to it by the Constitutions of the United States and of the State of Ohio.

In his opinion in the case (*Ambler Realty Company vs. Village of Euclid, Equity 898, January 14, 1924*) the court brushes aside apparently all previous decisions of other states and of the United States Supreme Court turning on similar issues and considers them of no moment and launches into a voluminous and extended discussion of the police power, construing it in accordance apparently with his own preconceived views as to the subject at issue.

The well-established principle of judicial policy by which our higher courts have come to the position that they will not substitute the court's views as to the propriety of action for that of the legislative body, seems to have no place in the court's approach to this question. In this instance the court considers itself quite competent to determine what is the best use of the different parts of the land in question and to substitute the court's judgment as to how the community in question should have been restricted and classified for that of those responsible for making such classification. Similarly, the court has no hesitation in substituting its view for that of the local legislative body.

Much is made of the fact that the constitutional validity of an ordinance of this nature under the Ohio Constitution has not been expressly passed upon by the State Supreme Court and the court even goes so far as to say that the Supreme Court of the United States cannot be said to have decided definitely or finally the exact question here involved.

In view of the decisions of that court in such cases as the *Hadacheck* case and others, this is a most astounding statement for a judicial officer to make. The court's decision reads like a chapter out of the far-far past and is certainly one to make the "judicious" as well as the "judicial" grieve. We cannot believe that the United States Supreme Court, when this case reaches it on appeal, can possibly take the same view of the situation as has been taken by the district court in this case.

The opinion, however, has already done considerable harm; for, as stated elsewhere in this issue, organized real estate interests in Cincinnati are already planning to contest the validity of the

new Cincinnati Zoning Ordinance upon the basis of the court's decision in this Euclid Village case. It is hoped therefore that the matter will be decided on appeal at as early a date as practicable.

### AN IMPORTANT BRIEF

In connection with this case an important brief reviewing the fundamental legal principles involved in Zoning Laws and citing the leading cases decided in support of such legislation was submitted to the court on behalf of the Ohio State Conference on City Planning as *amicus curiae*. Copies of this brief in type-written form can be obtained from Alfred Bettman, 1514 First National Bank Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, who appeared as attorney for the Ohio State Conference on City Planning.

### ZONING SUSTAINED IN NEW JERSEY

Two decisions handed down by the New Jersey courts, one last summer and one this winter, sustain the exercise of the Zoning power. The more important of the two is the so-called Woodbridge case (*Franklin Contracting Co. v. Deter et al.* 122 *Atlantic Reporter*, 600) affecting Woodbridge Township. The issue involved here was the validity of a Zoning ordinance which prohibited the erection in a certain zone of a new chemical factory.

The court held that the Zoning Ordinance was constitutional and said:

It is clearly directed against potential nuisances, that is to say, factories likely to make fumes or odors offensive to the residents of the district and is designed to promote the public health, and is well within the powers conferred by chapter 240 of the laws of 1920 (P. L. 455) upon which it rests and in that respect and to that extent is constitutional.

The other case (*Allen vs. City of Paterson et al.* 121 *Atlantic Reporter* 610) involved the validity of the action of a Board of Zoning Appeals in the City of Paterson which had permitted the building of a garage 7½ feet from the street line, when the Zoning Ordinance required such a garage to be at least 14 feet distant from that line. In this case an issue of hardship was involved, permission having been sought for the erection of a garage by one property owner whose adjoining neighbors possessed garages erected before the Zoning Ordinance had become effective. The court held



That the power to pass the modification of the Zoning ordinance was thus apparently conceded by the legislature, and this power, in the absence of direct legislation, may be exercised by resolution, by the ministerial or administrative body to which the power was confided by the local lawmaking body.

## BUSINESS DISTRICTS AND SETBACK LINES IN CALIFORNIA

An important decision recently handed down by the District Court of Appeal of the Second Appellate District of the State of California is the case known as the "Wilshire Boulevard Case" (*Zahn and Ross v. Board of Public Works, City of Los Angeles, Civil No. 4493, March 20, 1924*).

The issue in this case was the reasonableness of the provisions of the Los Angeles Zoning Ordinance which established as a Residence District and prohibited business in a section of the city along the Wilshire Boulevard—a great through traffic artery and public highway—and which the court believed was primarily a business street and was not suited to development for residence purposes.

In this case certain property owners sought to erect upon their property a one-story building to be used for store purposes. A permit for this building was denied by the Board of Public Works of Los Angeles on the ground that the Zoning Ordinance did not permit a store building in this zone and upon the further ground that the Ordinance required that such building should be set back a distance of 15 feet from the street line of Wilshire Boulevard.

Notwithstanding that the owners of this property sought to secure from the local legislative body, the City Council, a modification of the ordinance which would have permitted them to build their store building, and the fact that the City Council reported adversely against this on the ground that

Wilshire Boulevard is destined to become a show street when widened and beautified as contemplated, and that the encroachment of business upon this boulevard is at this time unnecessary, and would be a great detriment to the future development of this thoroughfare,

the court held that it was unreasonable to prohibit the development of the property in question for mercantile or store purposes.

The court took pains, however, not to express itself as to the validity of Zoning ordinances generally, nor to say anything in its opinion which could be construed as holding that it was not within the power of the legislature to delegate to the cities of the state of California the right to enact Zoning ordinances.

On this point the court had the following to say:

We are of the opinion that even upon the assumption that in a proper case such authority exists as a lawful exercise of the police power, in aid of an official plan of city development, nevertheless such power must be exercised in the manner very aptly stated in the Zoning law to which we have referred, (Stats. 1917, p. 1419), wherein it is required that in adopting an ordinance of this kind, the council "shall give reasonable consideration, among other things, to the character of the district, its peculiar suitability for particular uses, the conservation of property values and the direction of building development in accord with a well-considered plan." (See also, *Abbey Land Etc. Co. v. San Mateo*, 167 Cal. 434, 437.) It need not be denied here that the ordinance is the result of deliberate and careful study by the city planning commission, and that in general it does provide for the direction of building development, and that in many respects that direction is in accord with a well considered plan. But it is manifest that in the application of such plan to the particular area within which the property of petitioners is located, there has been a disregard of the character of that district and of its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and a failure to properly regard the conservation of property values.

Again the Court says:

So here it appears from the facts to which we have referred, that the ordinance in question, in its application to the property of petitioners and the immediate territory within which that property is situated, is not an ordinance for the protection of an established residence district or for the benefit of the inhabitants thereof; but that on the contrary it is an arbitrary attempt of the city authorities to discriminate between the uses of property permitted in that territory, and the uses of property permitted in other territory of similar general description, and that the circumstances do not exhibit any sufficient reason for the exercise of a power to impose such discriminatory limitations.

## VALIDITY OF SETBACK ORDINANCES

In discussing the validity of that feature of the issue which involves the legality of the so-called "setback ordinance" the court holds as follows:

We are further of the opinion that the so-called setback ordinance is an unlawful attempt by the city to exercise the police power in the limitation of the use of their property by the petitioners. It is not an ordinance having any of the characteristics of an ordinance for protection from fire or from other dangers which might arise from any condition pertaining to a proposed use of property. It does not attempt to prescribe a distance which must be maintained between buildings on the same side of the street. Wilshire Boulevard is a street one hundred feet in width. It is manifest that the purpose of requiring buildings to be set back 15 feet from the street line of such a street has no relation to danger from fire, or other dangers which might exist as between properties facing each other on opposite sides of the street. While the city bases its claim of right to enforce the setback ordinance, not upon the authority of a statute but upon the police power delegated to the city by the constitution, it is worthy of note that there is a statute adopted in the year 1917, (Stats. 1917, p. 1421), which purports to give authority to the city council of any municipality to provide a procedure for the fixing and establishing of setback lines on private property bordering upon a street, "and to condemn any and all property necessary or convenient for that purpose". It is admitted by counsel for respondents that they have been able to discover only one authority sanctioning the right under the police power to create setback lines. That is the case of *Town of Windsor v. Whitney*, 95 Conn. 357, 111 Atl. 354, 12 A. L. R. 669.

While the court is careful not to close the door to the enactment of proper setback ordinances, and does not express itself against the validity of such enactments, but contents itself with holding that the particular ordinance under review is invalid and unreasonable and inappropriate; it says in conclusion on this question—which has yet to be very largely determined by the courts—the following:

Without here discussing these cases, we are content to say that as applied to the property of petitioners herein, the ordinance now in question is nothing more than an attempt to regulate and control the use of private property, such regulation being based on merely aesthetic grounds, and having no reasonable reference to the safety, health, morals or general welfare of the people at large. In announcing this conclusion, we do not intend to express the opinion that setback ordinances are under any and all circumstances unauthorized by the police power, or that they may not be enacted and enforced in accordance with the principles which apply to the exercise of the power of eminent domain.

## PITTSBURGH ORDINANCE SUSTAINED

### THE NEIGHBORS HAVE THEIR DAY

An interesting case in which the validity of the recent Pittsburgh Zoning Ordinance was at issue is sustained in a decision handed down by Justice Ford of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County a few months ago.

This case differs from the usual run of cases in that it is one of the few in which property owners in a neighborhood who have not been satisfied with a decision of the Board of Appeals in connection with a proposed building development, have felt so strongly that they have taken the case to court and have figured as "persons aggrieved".

In the case at bar the question at issue was the validity of the action of the Board of Appeals in reversing the decision of the Superintendent of Building Inspection of Pittsburgh who had denied a permit for the building of a rubbish incinerating plant in a residential district. It appears that the Board of Appeals after a very careful inquiry into the whole subject and after granting a number of public hearings at which the property owners in the residential district who objected to the development were fully heard, had granted a permit for the erection of this incinerating plant—to be built, however, under strictly limited conditions all intended to prevent the plant from becoming a nuisance or detriment to the surrounding property.

Notwithstanding this careful action on the part of the Board of Appeals, the property owners in the district affected, considered that their rights had been jeopardized and employed counsel and carried up the case to the Court of Common Pleas and alleged that the decision of the Board of Appeals was illegal. Strangely enough they raised as one of the grounds of that illegality, the contention that the enabling act passed by the Pennsylvania legislature permitting the enactment of a Zoning Ordinance by the city of Pittsburgh was unconstitutional and void. This would seem to the unprejudiced observer as if the petitioners were trying to lift themselves by their boot straps.

They also alleged that the decision of the Board of Appeals was in violation of the ordinance, because of the fact that the Board had not fully heard those who were opposed to the pro-



posal, adding that the decision of the Board was arbitrary and against the weight of evidence.

The court takes up with great fairness and particularity all of the allegations of illegality and discusses them quite fully.

In rendering his opinion he says:

The great weight of authority sustains the validity of ordinances involving a comprehensive Zoning plan when enacted pursuant to legislative authority and has met with approval in Massachusetts, New York, Kansas, California, Iowa, Louisiana and other states.

Discussing the questions at issue the court says:

It is our conclusion that the acts authorizing cities of the second class to adopt a Zoning ordinance, and the ordinances of the city approved in pursuance with the acts, are valid, reasonable and constitutional enactments.

In disposing of the contention raised by the aggrieved property owners that the action was illegal, in that the legislature had sought to delegate its power to the Board of Appeals, the court says:

The act authorized Councils to create an administrative body for the ascertainment of facts and to apply the facts to certain requirements.

This is a most valuable differentiation of delegation of legislative power and a clear conception and understanding of the proper functions of a Board of Appeals or Adjustment. It is something that should be borne in mind by all persons seeking legislation creating Boards of Appeals and defining their powers.

The court's view of the respective functions of the judicial and legislative departments of government is in refreshing contrast to the decision in the Euclid Village case noticed in another part of this issue. In this Pittsburgh case Justice Ford says:

But whether an ordinance is wise or not, whether it is the best means to achieve the desired result, or whether the discretion vested in an administrative body should be exercised in a particular manner, are matters for the judgment of Councils, as expressed in an Ordinance, and of the Board, which exercises an authority committed to them.

In summing up his conclusions Justice Ford says:

A careful review of the proceedings and testimony, returned by the Board, together with the testimony taken at the hearing, does not convince that any of the grounds of illegality specified by the petitioners should be sustained. The Board acted in compliance with an Ordinance legally adopted in pursuance of legislative authority, and exercised a legal power given them by the Ordinance and in our opinion, their decision should be affirmed.

### WHO IS A PERSON AGGRIEVED?

One of the issues raised in this case in a supplementary question on which Justice Ford rendered a separate opinion was what constituted a "person aggrieved", within the meaning of the Enabling Act which provides that:

Any person or persons, jointly or severally, aggrieved by any decision of the Board of Appeals or the head of any department of said City or interested therein may present to the Court of Common Pleas a petition\*\*\*setting forth that such decision is illegal\*\*\*specifying the grounds of illegality.

The corporation which desired to erect the reduction plant in the neighborhood in question, and which was really the party most interested in this whole litigation but which did not legally appear, got permission to intervene, and thereupon raised the question that the citizens who had petitioned for a hearing and had carried the case up on appeal were not "persons aggrieved" within the meaning of the Act.

In determining this question the court rendered an interesting opinion as to what constitutes a "person aggrieved" citing the leading cases on this subject. With regard to the petitioners he held as follows:

Petitioners reside in a residential district and the proposed plant it is alleged will be near their homes, and they in common with all the residents in the neighborhood will be affected by the plant when in operation, and therefore are "persons aggrieved", within the true intent and meaning of the Act.

It was because of a realization of the restricted meaning given to the term "persons aggrieved" by the courts, that led those responsible for the formulation of the Standard Zoning Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce to provide with reference to Boards of Adjustment that not only any "person aggrieved" might present to the court an appeal from the decisions

of such Board, but that *any taxpayer* might also make such an appeal. Persons drafting enabling acts in various states should give very careful heed to this decision of the Pittsburgh court and should be careful to follow closely the exact terms of the Standard Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce in this regard.

### THE WAY ZONING LAWS SHOULD FUNCTION

We have reviewed this decision at considerable length as it illustrates how proper Zoning laws work in practice. In this case such laws are functioning exactly as they are intended. A proper enabling act was passed. A proper ordinance was formulated after careful investigation and according to a comprehensive plan. A Board of Appeals was created by which adjustment of such ordinance could be provided for. The rights, not merely of individual citizens whose property was involved were protected, but the rights of all neighbors and of individual citizens were protected by the provision that any party aggrieved might take an appeal.

Thus, an excellent object lesson is afforded of how a proper Zoning law actually works in practice. We understand that the decision in this case has been appealed to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. The final decision of the Appellate Court will be awaited with interest.

### STORES MAY BE EXCLUDED FROM RESIDENCE DISTRICTS IN MARYLAND

The recently enacted Baltimore Zoning Law has been strongly upheld by Judge Charles W. Heusler in the Superior Court recently in a case where a man desired to conduct a tailoring establishment in a building which under the Zoning law was in a residential district. Having been denied this use of his property, he brought a suit claiming that the Zoning law was invalid and unconstitutional, his attorney arguing that it was an invasion of personal rights and a violation of the constitutional guarantee that a man cannot be deprived of his property without due process of law.

The Assistant City Solicitor and an attorney representing a man who lived next door to the proposed tailoring shop contended

on the other hand that the law was not an invasion of the tailor's personal rights, but on the contrary was a measure for the protection of his property and was clearly a proper exercise of the police powers granted the municipality.

Judge Heuisler in his decision said in part:

I am a firm believer in State's rights and at every opportunity I have, will uphold the personal rights and liberties of the individual citizen. In that respect I am a fundamentalist. But the rights of the individual must be subordinated to existing circumstances. Society must, and does, grow and expand. No individual should be allowed to thwart or prevent such growth, being in an orderly way, that is satisfactory to the majority.

There has been too much of that in this city in the past. Baltimore has been seriously injured by the manner of its growth. Many of its most beautiful sections have been swept away. The municipality itself and every citizen in it has been injured by this condition. Now they have determined to protect themselves and they are going to do it. Those who don't like it can move out. They can get themselves a 10-acre patch in Baltimore county or go where they please. People of all classes and all races have been wandering about the town locating themselves wherever they please. It must stop. The Zoning ordinance is a wonderful thing and I am glad it's here. I want it to stay here and there is every reason why it should stay. It is constitutional.

Judge Heuisler also expressed the hope that the scope of the Zoning law would be broadened and its powers increased so that people of all classes and all races can no longer "wander about the town locating themselves where they please."

It is announced that the tailor will carry his case to the Court of Appeals, and a decision from that court is expected within the next month or two.

## CAN THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES TO THE ACRE BE LEGALLY LIMITED?

An interesting decision has just been handed down by the Appellate Division of the Second Department of New York State in connection with the New Rochelle Zoning ordinance. The question has turned solely on the validity of a provision in the New Rochelle ordinance which sought to limit the number of families to the acre—a provision which is somewhat novel in Zoning practice but which is coming to find greater and greater favor with practical Zoning consultants although it has been



clearly recognized that it is still in the realm of doubtful questions, and that the courts may have difficulty in sustaining enactments of this kind.

In this New Rochelle case (*Barker v. Switzer, Inspector of Buildings of the City of New Rochelle, Appellate Division, Supreme Court, Second Judicial Department*) the sole question at issue was the single question of whether Section 12 of the ordinance was valid. This section read as follows:

Section 12. NUMBER OF FAMILIES HOUSED PER ACRE. In an "A" district no dwelling or tenement house shall hereafter be erected or altered to accommodate or make provision for more than 10 families on an acre of land or more than a proportional number of families on a proportional acre of land.

The court was careful not to express an opinion as to whether a provision of this kind was within the power of the legislature to enact, but contents itself with reaching a decision, in this case, solely upon the basis of the *legal* questions involved, holding rightly that the power to limit the number of families to the acre was not one of the powers conferred upon the city by the state enabling act. On this point the court had the following to say:

We are of the opinion that the ordinance, insofar as it undertakes to limit the number of families that may be housed on an acre of land, is beyond the power delegated to the city in the enabling statute, and should, therefore, be declared invalid.

On the general question of Zoning, it is refreshing to find the court going out of its way to sustain the enactment of Zoning laws saying:

It is not attempted, and, indeed at this late day, it would be idle to impair, whittle down or set at naught "zoning ordinances," which in no wise transcend constitutional limitations or the power delegated by the legislature.

Thus another instance is afforded of the wisdom of not attempting to exceed the powers conferred upon a municipality by the legislature. If it is sought to do something that the legislative act does not authorize, it is the height of folly to attempt it without getting such authorization from the legislative body.

## A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

In Missouri, following the adverse decision of the highest court, reported in our last issue, by which the people of Missouri were denied the protection afforded to property owners in other states, a movement was set on foot to amend the constitution of that state so as to make it clear beyond any question that the cities of the state should have the right to enact Zoning ordinances.

Such a clause was included in the "Home Rule" provisions of the general revision of the constitution recommended by the Constitutional Convention of 1922 and was submitted to the voters in February of this year.

All of the important provisions included in this general amendment were rejected at the polls including the "Home Rule" provision for Missouri cities which contained the clause for Zoning. This, however, failed of adoption by only a few thousand votes. In St. Louis, for example, only 49,000 votes were polled, with a total registration of 275,000, and yet very nearly all of the propositions received a 3 to 1 majority in favor of adoption.

Discussing this situation, F. E. Lawrence, Jr., Secretary of the St. Louis City Plan Commission said recently:

Under the favorable vote received in most cities of the state it is apparent that once a large vote is had, that it is almost certain that Zoning will be approved, and with this in mind the local leaders are laying plans to have the Zoning proposition submitted at the November election, when it is probable that a large vote will be recorded.

It is to be hoped that the electors of Missouri will seize this opportunity in the fall and bring their state into harmony with other progressive states in protecting its citizens in the enjoyment of their property rights.

## PHILADELPHIA BEGINS ALL OVER AGAIN ON A ZONING PROGRAMME

Zoning in Philadelphia originally received its impetus from the Philadelphia Housing Association in 1914 and 1915.

Permissive legislation from the General Assembly granted the city the right to Zone in 1915, and the first Zoning Commission was appointed in 1916.

Former Mayor Moore appointed a second Commission at the beginning of his term of office, and that Commission has now given place to the new body appointed on April first by present Mayor Kendrick.

This new Commission has several prominent organizations represented, including the Philadelphia Housing Association, the Engineers' Club, the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Operative Builders Association, and the Philadelphia Real Estate Board.

There is strong evidence that the new Commission will be more successful than former commissions, for the entire city government is working in close harmony with all public projects. The Councilmanic Committee on Zoning has publicly expressed itself as being anxious to co-operate with the present Commission in the preparation of an acceptable ordinance.

## CINCINNATI NOW AMONG ZONED CITIES

By a unanimous vote of the City Council of Cincinnati the revised Zoning Ordinance was enacted on April 1st. It was approved by the Mayor on April 4th and after a lapse of 30 days, became effective on May 4th.

The Real Estate Board maintained an antagonistic attitude throughout the hearings and finally withdrew in anger before the conclusion of a series of special conferences held between representatives of groups opposed to certain provisions of the Ordinance and the City Council Committee. The Chairman of the Real Estate representatives has stated that the Real Estate Board will use every effort to knock the Ordinance out by court action, based upon the decision in the Euclid Village Case in Cleveland. The Building Owners and Managers Association had opposed the height limitations of the Ordinance and some minor details and the architects had opposed certain requirements as to open spaces, particularly for apartment houses and in business districts. After the Ordinance had been revised, these two latter groups withdrew their opposition.

The hearings were marked by considerable interest and on one or two occasions there was a good attendance by citizens. An active publicity campaign through the newspapers and a speakers' bureau was carried on by the United City Planning Committee. Civic organizations and hundreds of citizens submitted letters ap-

proving the Ordinance and these were placed on record with Council. The United City Planning Committee gathered supporting statements from many sources including architects, engineers, housing specialists, physicians, experts in recreation, traffic, social service and other authorities and made this data a part of the official record before Council. These statements have been printed in pamphlet form.

The officials of the City administration stood behind the Ordinance from the beginning and did not falter in the face of the opposition.

Great credit is due to George R. Hauser, Building Commissioner, to Irwin Krohn of the City Planning Commission and the Council Committee consisting of Robert Schmidt Jr., Charles O. Rose and Dr. Bertha C. Lietze, all of whom did effective service in conducting public hearings and in working out the details of the revision. The special Council Committee conducted its work with commendable speed and efficiency. It is doubtful if Cincinnati ever had a legislative committee of the kind which did its work more satisfactorily.

A striking feature of the story surrounding the enactment of the Zoning Ordinance is the fact that the violent and vociferous opposition of the Real Estate Board made so little apparent impression upon the community.

The ordinance as enacted lacks some of the strength of the original, due to the necessity of compromising on certain features, but all in all it is a very good ordinance. The Technical Advisory Corporation which drafted the ordinance and the Council Committee yielded on comparatively few important points. The largest concession was on the limitation of the height of buildings. The original limitation in the business districts was one and one-half times the width of street (distance to the opposite street line) with appropriate set-back provisions. This provision was changed in the final draft to 4 times the width of the street. While superficially this was a big concession, yet in reality it is in many respects fortunate that the height limitation drew the fire, because it made it possible to retain in the Ordinance other provisions much more important in a city like Cincinnati than the height limitation.

Another concession was made in the permitted height of apartment houses and their percentage of lot occupancy. The



revised provision so far as it concerns apartment houses in small residences is still a very satisfactory requirement in as much as it makes it difficult to erect an apartment house more than 3 or 4 stories high. The concession on percentage of lot occupancy in apartment house districts was greater than seems desirable.

The revised Ordinance allows certain other things not permitted in the original Ordinance; for instance, restaurants in apartment houses are allowed, provided they have only an inside entrance; residences are permitted in nuisance industry districts. The other changes were for the most part not vital.

The change for which the Real Estate Board fought hardest was for an unrestricted district in the outlying sections of the city. A considerable portion of this undeveloped area adapted almost exclusively for residence purposes has been placed in "Residence B" classification. The Real Estate Board wanted all of this area placed in an unrestricted classification. The point was vigorously debated but the Technical Advisory Corporation and the members of the City Council Committee refused to yield.

All in all despite the fact that some concessions had to be made, Cincinnati has a remarkably good Ordinance. The vigor of the opposition has been helpful rather than otherwise, because the proponents are assured there were no vulnerable points in the Ordinance that had not been attacked. It remains to be seen what steps the Real Estate Board will take to carry out their threat of court action.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Cincinnati.

## THE FEDERAL CITY

During the past year the American Civic Association has set up in Washington a Committee of 100 on the Federal City, under the chairmanship of Mr. Frederic A. Delano, formerly identified with the making and adoption of the Chicago Plan, and now Chairman of the Committee on the Plan of New York. The Washington Committee recently issued a Preliminary Report which was accepted by Mr. J. Horace McFarland, President of the American Civic Association, to be transmitted to the more than 50 Committees on the Federal

City which have been organized in the various cities of the country.

The Report consists of recommendations made by a series of sub-committees on the different phases of improvement needed. Repeatedly attention is directed to the devastation of trees, hills, valleys and streams which is rapidly reducing the newer parts of Washington to barren clay levels very different from the city which George Washington must have pictured when he selected the wooded hills along the Potomac as the site for the "Federal City."

### THE L'ENFANT PLAN

The famous L'Enfant Plan, prepared 142 years ago, covered only about 1/10 of the original District, including old Georgetown. The plan ended at Florida Avenue which connects the Potomac and the Anacostia Rivers in a semi-circular belt road. Even within the 8 or 10 square miles included in the L'Enfant Plan, which was prepared under the closest supervision of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, much has happened which was out of harmony with the plan. The Treasury Building was located in a hollow which completely blocks the Pennsylvania Avenue approach to the Executive Mansion; the Washington Monument was placed slightly off the axis and cross axis from the Capitol and the White House; the Library of Congress encroaches upon the Pennsylvania Avenue approach to the Capitol; Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and the Capitol is hardly the imposing avenue which L'Enfant must have pictured; and the unsightly shacks which have crept in between "the Avenue" and the Mall do not form an appropriate setting for the public buildings and grounds of the capital.

### THE GROWTH OF WASHINGTON

In 1800, when the seat of government was moved to the site upon the Potomac the census reports a population of 14,000 including Georgetown and Alexandria. It was estimated that at the end of 100 years the Federal City might have a population of 100,000 and ultimately might expect a growth to 200,000. As a matter of fact, in 1900, the date of the Centenary Celebration of the occupation of Washington

by the Federal Government, there were 278,000 people in the District of Columbia which by this time included only the land ceded by Maryland,—some 69 square miles of which 60 square miles are land. Even then the population had spread beyond the boundaries of the L'Enfant Plan.

In 1901 Senator McMillan of Michigan, aided by Charles Moore, was responsible for the famous Commission composed of Daniel H. Burnham, Charles F. McKim, Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., which resulted in the revival, revision and extension of the L'Enfant Plan. A net-work of railroad tracks had encroached upon the Mall. Through the efforts of Senator McMillan these were removed and the stately Union Station was built. A new axis was set up to include the Washington Monument and in the years that have passed since the McMillan Report the Grant Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial have been placed on this new axis. And the new public buildings which have been erected conform to the Mall Plan.

#### DESTRUCTION OF PROPOSED PARK AREAS

But many of the recommendations of the Commission for the acquiring of park areas are yet unrealized. Some can never be realized for the original forest has fallen before the ax, the streams have been filled and rows upon rows of attached houses have been set upon the level clay. Not only have streams and wooded banks of many of the tributaries to Rock Creek disappeared and so made impossible the park connections planned by the McMillan Commission, the flow of Rock Creek itself is diminishing and if the present devastation continues, Rock Creek will soon be a dry, rocky canyon, which affords an occasional outlet for storm waters. For sanitary and aesthetic reasons this stream should be preserved.

Since the McMillan Park Report presented to the 57th Congress there have been 29 sessions of Congress, and during all this time concerted efforts have been made to save proposed park areas from destruction; but many acres have been diverted to private uses so that only by excessive cost could bare, clay banks be secured to take the place of the wooded ravines with original growth of timber which were included in the proposed park system.

## CAPITAL PARK COMMISSION BILL

The Washington Committee is centering its first efforts on the passage of the Ball-Langley Capital Park Commission Bill (S. 112; H. R. 49) which would create a Capital Park Commission, consisting of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Chairmen of the two Committees in Congress on Public Buildings and Grounds and the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia, who shall have power "to acquire such lands as in its judgment shall be necessary and desirable in the District of Columbia and adjacent areas in Maryland and Virginia." Appropriations not exceeding 1 cent for each inhabitant of the continental United States would be authorized. In the selection of lands the advice of the Fine Arts Commission shall be requested.

The bill would provide a method for action. The District of Columbia has lost areas absolutely vital to its park system because Congress has been slow to act. When an authorizing bill weathers the long process needed for its passage in the House and in the Senate, it must be followed by estimates for appropriations included in the executive departments, run the gauntlet of the Bureau of the Budget and the Committees and floor debate of both Houses of Congress. When all this circumlocution is required to add a single lot or acre to the park system, it is hardly remarkable that one plot after another has been put to other uses by the owners.

That is why we need a Capital Park Commission, with power to act.

## WASHINGTON NEEDS A NEW PLAN

But the Capital Park Commission Bill, while it would provide a *method* for acquiring park lands which would make it possible to save areas threatened by destruction, would not control the street system, the laying out of open country, the planning of utilities, the location of public buildings, both Federal and District, and all those other features of a comprehensive city plan.

The Washington Committee urges an immediate reconsideration of the street plan in areas where streets have not



yet been cut through and it recommends that "a central supervisory planning authority should be set up which can employ as needed for positive and constructive effort the ablest men of the country, men equal to those who served so well under the McMillan Park Commission." Many acres of open land are now being utilized by wasteful grading and unsightly cuts in an attempt to force a street system utterly unfitted to the topography. The open spaces so charmingly scattered through old Washington are all too few in the newer sections.

Washington has outgrown its old plan. The Nation is urged to supply a new plan before it is too late.

A Preliminary Report of 100 pages made by the Washington "Committee of 100 on the Federal City" to the American Civic Association, has recently been published. Copies can be obtained from the American Civic Association, Union Trust Building, Washington, D. C. Every student of city planning and of Regional planning will desire to obtain a copy of this valuable and interesting document.

## PROGRESS IN NEW YORK

The work of developing New York's great Regional Plan has reached a second stage in its progress and has gone beyond the stage of preliminary study to a stage of tentative action. One hundred and fourteen cities and organizations of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, within a radius of 50 miles of New York City, sent over 430 official delegates to the Regional Traffic Conference held at the Town Hall in New York City May 20th, on the joint call of 13 organizations, including the Merchants' Association of New York, the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, the New York State Chamber of Commerce, the Westchester County Chamber of Commerce, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce and 7 others, in addition to the Committee on Plan of New York.

Following the Conference, the mayors of cities and the presidents of villages were dinner guests of the Committee on Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs. The occasion was unique, as the first on which the chief executives of the 273 municipalities in this Region ever came together to discuss their common problems.

More than 900 civic associations had been asked to send the chairmen of their Traffic, Accident-Prevention and City Planning Committees, to the Conference. The acceptances received indicated that more than 1,000 persons would participate in the deliberations—deliberations which may lead to a solution of the traffic congestion, traffic accident and traffic cost problems.

The Conference considered particularly how the traffic problems of New York and the network of municipalities surrounding it are influenced by the height of buildings, by Zoning Regulations, by the location of inter-city highways, and the extent to which these problems may be alleviated or eliminated by a plan for the future development of the 5,500 square miles in New York State, New Jersey and Connecticut, which is now generally recognized as constituting the Region of New York.

Into the small compass of a single day's Conference was compressed a programme fraught with the very greatest significance for the future development of the greatest metropolitan center in the world. Frederic A. Delano, Chairman of the Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs presided. The delegates were welcomed by the Governor of New Jersey, Hon. George S. Silzer, Lieutenant-Governor George R. Lunn of New York and Mayor Hylan of New York City. At the opening session of the Conference in the morning Irving T. Bush of the Chamber of Commerce, presided and an introductory statement as to the purposes of the Conference was made by Thomas Adams, General Director of the Regional Plan of New York. This opening session was then devoted to a consideration of traffic problems in relation to the Regional Plan by Ernest P. Goodrich, Consulting Engineer to the Regional Plan Committee and Harold M. Lewis, Chief Engineering Assistant.

In the afternoon with Frederic A. Delano and Frederick P. Keppel, former Secretary of the Committee on Regional Plan and now President of the Carnegie Corporation, jointly presiding, a further discussion of the morning's papers and the problems involved was had in which leading experts participated. Among these were Arthur S. Tuttle, Chief Engineer, Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York, John G. Agar, Vice-Chairman of the New York State Association, Daniel L. Turner, Consulting Engineer of the N. Y. State Transit Commission, General Hugh L. Scott and Walter Kidde of the New Jersey State Highway Commission and J. Rowland Bibbins, of the

American Society of Mechanical Engineers. At 6.30 a dinner was given to the mayors in the cities and communities in the Region affected, and the evening was devoted to a further session of the Conference at which addresses were made by Messrs. Frederic A. Delano, Dwight W. Morrow, Lawson Purdy, Frederic B. Pratt and George McAneny.

Thomas Adams, General Director of Plans and Surveys for the Committee on Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs, in discussing the plans for the Conference said recently:

What is needed is an organized effort to deal with the traffic problems of all the communities within the Region of New York and simultaneously with the many other problems of the Region which are beyond the control of individual cities. Many cities in this Region are beginning to realize, for instance, that a large proportion of their traffic-accident and traffic-congestion problems arise outside of their own borders, and that these problems can be solved only by regional action, which means by the co-operation of the many communities involved.

Another great need in the Region of New York is for a proper understanding of the relation between traffic and the general life of the community. The effect of building development on traffic congestion, for instance, is too often ignored even by authorities on traffic problems. The extent to which the height, bulk and use of buildings in this Region are causes of traffic congestion is also generally overlooked. We have been thinking of traffic problems in terms of streets crowded with automobiles, buses, street cars, taxicabs, and trucks. This is all wrong. We must go farther back for the causes of our present traffic difficulties. We must think of traffic problems in terms of high office buildings, apartment houses, hotels, factories and other buildings, and the relation of these things to narrow streets, insufficient bridges, subways and tunnels.

## A REGIONAL PLANNING EXHIBIT

Following this conference on traffic problems, during the week from May 19th to 25th an Exhibition of maps and drawings illustrating the surveys and plans prepared by the Committee on Regional Plan and others was shown at the Russell Sage Foundation Building, 130 East 22nd Street, New York.



## THE INDUSTRIES OF THE NEW YORK REGION

One of the first of the series of industrial surveys which the Committee on Plan of New York has had in course of preparation has recently been made public—that of the metal industries—which it is stated are collectively the largest employers of labor in New York City and its environs.

The Report shows a marked tendency of these industries to move from Manhattan and Brooklyn into New Jersey and Queens. The importance of this finding lies in the fact that more than a quarter million of workers (250,000) are employed by the metal industries in this Region, and that any large scale change is likely to affect three times the number of employees directly involved, assuming an average of two dependents for each worker in the industry.

The survey on which the Report was based covers manufacturing plants in every branch of the metal industry, ranging from the manufacture of pins to printing presses and from platinum rings to plumbing supplies.

How vital these studies are, is disclosed by a footnote to the Report indicating the serious consequences to the industries affected of being located in the wrong place—a matter which most cities throughout the United States have given little concern to and which it would well pay them to take to heart and consider carefully.

In discussing this question the Report has the following to say:

The complaints made in the course of the interviewing, point clearly to the importance of intelligent advice regarding the choice of industrial sites. The limitations of the various sections are seldom if ever mentioned by the organizations which are working for the development of particular portions of the area and are often discovered only when demonstrated by experience. Some of the manufacturers are bitter and resentful because they feel that they have been misled in selecting their locations. It would seem highly desirable from the point of view of the future of the New York area as a whole that each part of the area recognize its shortcomings as well as its advantages and restrict its efforts to recruit new plants to such enterprises as can operate there to best advantage.



The survey brings to light a number of interesting facts. Among these may be noted the following:

There are now only 5 iron foundries on Manhattan Island, where at one time there were 65. In 1900 there were 35 large metal plants producing heavy and bulky products on Manhattan South of Canal Street, and in 1922 there were only 12 such plants in this area. There are to-day less than half as many metal workers in Manhattan south of 59th Street as there were in 1900.

Students of Regional Planning will find it advantageous to obtain a copy of this Report which may be obtained from the Committee on Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs at 130 East 22nd Street, New York City.

## REGIONAL PLANNING FOR CHICAGO

That Chicago is making progress with its great Regional Plan and taking its place ultimately along with New York and Washington, is evidenced by the meeting held in Chicago last fall at which Frederic A. Delano, who has done so much for the Plan of Chicago and is now doing equally as much for the plans of New York and Washington, made an inspiring address, launching the Chicago Regional Planning Association.

On that occasion Mr. Delano pointed out that there is necessarily a close relation between City Planning and Regional Planning and that the two must go hand in hand; one supplements the other. He defined City Planning as primarily a big job of replanning and reconstruction, the correction of past errors, of changing things to meet new and unexpected conditions. As a notable example of city planning he cites the case of Paris in 1859 when Paris was Haussmannized.

Regional Planning, on the other hand, according to Mr. Delano, is planning for the future in the suburbs and in the open country and added that this is the sort of planning that has been carried on so successfully in Europe.

Discussing what should be the limit of size of a satellite city, Mr. Delano expressed the opinion that such cities should be complete, well-rounded cities and not simply dormitories for the neighboring great metropolis, and that while opinions differ as to the range of comfortable size, the general consensus of view was that such a city should not exceed 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants.

What Mr. Delano said on this occasion as to the importance of scale should be taken to heart by all students of City Planning. He defined scale as the relation of the size and proportion of each building to its environment, to the width of the street. To bring home to his hearers what scale meant he asked them to imagine, for instance, the Capitol at Washington—a building beautiful in itself, splendidly proportioned and now placed in an ideal position on the brow of a hill overlooking the city—to imagine that same building set down in Wabash Avenue, Chicago, fronting the elevated railroad and asked “What would it look like?”

No better description of the problems Mr. Delano is battling with in New York and Washington could be had than his phrase which he attributes to a Frenchman recently visiting New York who described it as “A City in Fetters.”

New York is not the only “city in fetters.” Its great associate in the Middle West, Chicago, is equally a city in fetters. In fact most of our American cities are well within that description.

We regret that lack of space prevents us from quoting more fully from this informing and inspiring address of Mr. Delano's. Those who desire to study it further will find it given quite fully in the *National Municipal Review* for March.

It is thus seen that Chicago has launched its Regional Plan under very happy auspices, and we may expect to find in a short time the same series of important studies being made there that have already been made in New York by the Committee on Regional Plan of that city.

## REGIONAL PLANNING FOR BOSTON

While New York, Chicago and Washington are thus making very considerable progress in the development of a great Regional Plan for their Districts, Boston is also taking up this question and seeking to secure from the Massachusetts legislature the enactment of a bill which will provide for the development of such a Regional Plan. In this respect Massachusetts is departing considerably from the direction in which these other great cities are proceeding. These have thought it more advantageous to seek to do their work through private initiative, through the public-spirited support of the citizen. In Massachusetts, however, those interested in the project are seeking legislative action.

A measure to make such a study possible was introduced in the House on January 14th, last, by Mr. Blanchard of Cambridge upon the petition of Van Ness Bates, the Consultant to the Massachusetts Planning Commission.

The bill (House No. 721) provides for the

Compilation of a General Plan of Development for the Metropolitan District of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by the Division of Metropolitan Planning of the Metropolitan District Commission.

A hearing was had on this proposal recently. Recent advices indicate that consideration of this measure is to be postponed until next year.

The bill provides in very great detail for the scope and direction which such studies shall take.

Those interested in this proposal can obtain copies of the measure and further information about it from Arthur F. Blanchard, 159 Upland Road, Cambridge, Mass.

## IN IOWA

In Iowa there is considerable Zoning activity following the enactment of the Zoning Enabling Act of last year. As a result of the movement launched in Iowa City by the local Engineers' Club, the city council a few weeks ago appointed a Zoning Commission of 12 members. Professor F. G. Higbee, who was chairman of the Special Zoning Committee of the Engineers' Club, was appointed chairman of the new Commission. Thus the movement starts under the happiest auspices and is in the hands of its friends. The personnel of the Commission is said to be exceptionally strong. On it are represented the Iowa City Engineers' Club, Iowa City Women's Clubs, Iowa City Building and Loan Association, Professional Women's Club, University of Iowa, City Engineering Department and the City Legal Department.

In addition to these organizations represented the following professions are also represented: two engineers, a bond saleswoman, a banker, two realtors, a lumberman, a general contractor and builder, two attorneys and a university editor. It is noteworthy that two women are included in the membership of 12.

## ZONING FOR HARLAN

Another Iowa city, Harlan, has recently appointed a Zoning Commission of 3 members through action taken by the city council. Mr. Shelby Cullison, a local attorney, has been made chairman of the Commission. The Commission is already at work and a Zoning ordinance is expected to result from its labors before long.

## CENTERVILLE READY TO REPORT

Through the Secretary of the Association of Commerce Centerville is reported to have an ordinance creating a Zoning and City Planning Commission ready for submission to the city council.

This is another result, undoubtedly, of the activities of Rolland S. Wallis, Municipal Engineer and Secretary of the Iowa Town Planning Association. Mr. Wallis recently delivered a lecture on Zoning at Mason City and also at Oskaloosa. Thus the cause of Zoning is being advanced in Iowa.

## IN COLORADO

In Pueblo, Colorado, the appointment of a Zoning Committee has resulted from the organized efforts of the Pueblo Real Estate Exchange.

## THE FUTURE OF FIFTH AVENUE

Following the decision of the Court of Appeals in the case of the Fifth Avenue Zoning Ordinance reported in our last issue, property owners along that thoroughfare opposite Central Park have been hastening to "make hay while the sun shines" and have been working out plans for the development of their property with skyscraper apartment houses.

While it was announced that the Board of Estimate and Apportionment—the law-making power with regard to the Zoning Ordinance—would seek to reenact the ordinance which covered the height limit on Fifth Avenue above 59th Street, following the adverse decision of the State's highest court, in this matter, yet up to the present time no such action has been



taken by the local authorities. In view of the fact that they were unable before to secure unanimous action, there is not much likelihood of any change being made in the present law. Many observers felt that the action taken by the local authorities which led to this litigation was extreme and contrary to the normal tendency of development for that part of the city.

It would seem now as if upper Fifth Avenue were destined to be developed as an apartment house street similar to upper Park Avenue.

In short, it does not seem reasonable to expect any considerable part of Manhattan Island to be developed otherwise than as an apartment house city, insofar as its residential districts are concerned.

Students of Zoning should not be led astray by statements that have been made with regard to the Fifth Avenue case. It has no bearing whatever upon the legality of Zoning laws elsewhere, as the decision dealt entirely with a technical detail of the local ordinance, and with a case where a rather drastic requirement was imposed contrary to the normal development of a part of the community.

## IN MASSACHUSETTS

In Massachusetts the number of towns and communities that are becoming Zoned is constantly increasing. One of the latest is the Town of Wakefield where a proposed Zoning law has recently been submitted by the Town Planning Board, with Arthur C. Comey as Consultant.

Springfield has recently adopted a Major Street Thoroughfare and Parkway Plan following the report made by the Technical Advisory Corporation some time ago. The Town of Saugus has recently established a Planning Board of 5 members who are to be elected at the annual meeting held in March. Methuen and Fairhaven have similar plans under way. In Attleboro and Needham the Chamber of Commerce is considering the question of Zoning, and in Cambridge one of the last acts of the outgoing City Council was to adopt a new Zoning ordinance. This makes 11 places Zoned and 31 places at work on Zoning in Massachusetts. Other towns which are working on Zoning are Lexington, which recently voted to Zone the town.

## BOSTON

The City of Boston has sought from the legislature the enactment of a complete Zoning law applicable to that city. A bill providing for such a law (House 1061) has recently been introduced upon the petition of Mayor Curley, and has been reported favorably by the Committee on Mercantile Affairs to which it was referred. All students of Zoning will be interested in seeing the text of this 27-page measure which is now pending in the Massachusetts legislature.

## MINNEAPOLIS ADOPTS ZONING ORDINANCE

The city of Minneapolis has recently adopted a Zoning ordinance through action taken by its city council. This is a complete Zoning ordinance and replaces a partial ordinance which had been in existence heretofore. The Minneapolis Real Estate Board has taken an active part in the framing of the new ordinance.

## RECENT REPORTS ON ZONING

Among the recent reports on Zoning that have come to our attention is the Report on West Hartford, Conn., of Robert Whitten and the Preliminary Report on the Elizabeth City Plan made by the City Plan Commission of Elizabeth, New Jersey, Technical Advisory Corporation, consultants. This is a very attractively printed Report with a number of striking and effective "before" and "after" photographs showing the great improvements achieved through intelligent development. It concerns itself with such topics as: The True Conception of City Planning, The City and Its People, Health, Public Equipment and Facilities, Waste Disposal, Public Utilities, Fire Protection, Police, Street System, Railroads, Education, The Operation of the City, Can Elizabeth ever be a City Beautiful, Waste Lands, The Next Step in City Planning for Elizabeth.

The Report is well illustrated photographically and contains a map showing a street system and the possibilities of a circumferential street system.

From the Pacific Coast an interesting Report on a proposed Zoning ordinance for Portland, Oregon, comes to us, sponsored

by the Portland City Club, commenting in detail on the proposed ordinance which has been compiled by joint committees from the City Planning Commission and the Portland Realty Board.

Summing up its conclusions the Committee has the following to say:

It believes that it is time we were giving conscious development to our physical surroundings for the public good and has concluded that the proposed Zoning ordinance meets our present requirements as far as seems practicable and that it should receive public approval.

A widespread campaign of public education is being carried out by the City Zoning Committee that is responsible for the ordinance; 28 community meetings have already been held in different parts of the city.

## RECENT ZONING LEGISLATION

Although only 13 states were in legislative session during the present year, Zoning bills have been introduced in a number of them, notably in South Carolina, where a bill closely following the Standard Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce was introduced in February and has since become a law.

A similar measure amending the existing Zoning law in a number of respects was introduced in the Rhode Island legislature.

In Mississippi a bill modeled upon the Standard Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce was also introduced in both houses. Thus, one state after another avails itself of the Standard Enabling Act, insuring the soundness of the legal foundation of Zoning in those states.

## ZONING PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES

In a statement issued from the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce at Washington in January, Zoning Ordinances were in effect in 221 municipalities on January first, last. During the year, Zoning Ordinances were adopted by 81 municipalities with a population of about 8,000,000 divided as follows: 33 having a population of less than 10,000;

27 with more than 10,000 and less than 50,000; and 21 having a population of over 50,000.

A complete list of Zoned municipalities with details as to the basic character of the ordinances has been published by the Department and can be obtained in typewritten form upon application.

The Department has also recently issued in printed form a slightly revised edition of the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act which can be obtained from the Government Printer at a cost of 5¢ or upon application to the Department itself.

The new edition contains an important Foreword written by Mr. Hoover which it will repay all students of Zoning to read. It is interesting to learn of the very great success which the Standard Enabling Act has had and the extent to which the various states of the Union are following it in their new Enabling Legislation, which must be very gratifying to the authorities at Washington.

Since this statement was issued last January the following municipalities have adopted Zoning Ordinances: Orlando, Fla.; Dedham, Mass.; Lexington, Mass.; Malden, Mass.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Pompton Lakes, N. J.; Fanwood, N. J.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Oil City, Pa.; Kenosha, Wis.

















# Housing Betterment

AUGUST, 1924

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# Housing Betterment

105 EAST 22nd STREET, NEW YORK CITY

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## £1,000,000 FOR EMPLOYERS' HOUSING IN ENGLAND

An interesting indication of a "return to normalcy" in England toward private enterprise and away from government subsidy, is found in the increasing number of large employers of labor who, realizing the desirability of stabilizing their labor supply and also having a sense of responsibility for the wellbeing of those who share with them in their undertakings, have determined to build houses for their employees.

One of the largest of these schemes is that announced by the Great Western Railway. Like many other large industrial undertakings they have been faced with the urgent problem of housing their staff, which now numbers in all over 100,000 men.

Various proposals have been considered by the company's officials, and its Board of Directors have finally adopted the following two schemes:

1. To assist the staff to purchase their houses. In this case the company is prepared to lend 90% of the value on mortgage at 5%, repayable within 20 years.

2. To assist the staff to form Public Utility Housing Societies.

As a large number of men, particularly of the "uniform" grades, are unable to shoulder the responsibility of purchasing houses, this alternative method for providing houses to let has met with a wide response. It makes a special appeal to men who are liable to be moved from one area to another. The company are prepared to purchase sites, to arrange for their lay-out on the most modern lines, to construct roads and sewers, and to lease the site in sections, as required for building, for 99 years on a 4% ground-rent basis to the Societies.

In addition, the company in approved cases will provide the capital for the house up to 90% of the cost at 4% interest, repayment being spread over 50 years. The members of each Society, therefore, collectively have only to find 10%, ample time being allowed for this purpose.

The first society formed was the Great Western (London) Garden Village Society, Limited, and other societies have been formed, or are in process of establishment at Cardiff, Barry, Penarth, Newport, Severn Tunnel, Swansea, Port Talbot, Llanelly, and elsewhere on the system. For the Great Western (London) Society, the company have acquired two estates—one at Acton, and the other at Hayes, Middlesex. The former consists of 46 acres, making ultimate provision for some 500 houses; and the Hayes site of 60 acres, with provision for 600 houses. The lay-out of both estates provides ample open spaces and good gardens, and the houses will be in pairs and groups of four.

It is stated that the company is expending £1,000,000. in this scheme.

## HOUSING THE MINERS

Another interesting development of employers' housing is the scheme announced by Lord Londonderry for the housing of the miners at his Durham collieries. Believing that many of his workmen desire to own their own houses, he has arranged to build houses of which he will sell one house only to any one official or workman in his employ who wishes to purchase. The purchaser pays £5 on account and will get the benefit of the government subsidy, which is calculated at about £75 per house.

The cost of the house, less the deposit, and after giving credit for the government subsidy, will be payable by weekly installments of 10s., which will pay for both principal and interest in a period of 14 years, the principal bearing interest at 3% per annum. The purchaser may anticipate the weekly instalments if he wishes to expedite his complete ownership of the house.

The houses will probably be of the three-roomed type, with scullery and bathroom, and it is estimated that they will cost about £300 each, after deducting the subsidy. The purchaser will be entitled to the possession of the house on its completion, and the balance unpaid will remain on mortgage at 3%, the money being advanced by Lord Londonderry.

Most of the men who are expected to become purchasers of these houses are miners receiving a rent allowance of 5s. per



week; they will thus be able to buy them for an additional 5s. per week. As an experiment, Lord Londonderry offers to build 20 houses at Dawdon and 20 at Seaham, and it is understood that he will extend this scheme if the demand arises.

## REHOUSING ENGLAND'S MINERS

These efforts seem comparatively small contrasted with the really gigantic efforts that the mining communities of Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, and other colliery areas in the Midlands and in North Wales are carrying out through the Industrial Housing Association. Through this corporation a great scheme for the rehousing of the miners throughout England has been launched. 50,000 modern labor-saving houses are being built in different parts of the mining communities at the rate of 250 houses a week. The effect of this upon the industrial and living conditions of a great industry is incalculable. It should do much to remove the constant sources of friction and the unceasing industrial disturbances that have been characteristic of the mining industry for so many years past.

## SLUM CLEARANCE IN ENGLAND

Notwithstanding the high cost of building and the problems with which England is confronted in meeting the housing shortage caused by lack of normal construction prior to, during and since the war, the authorities in many English cities are resolutely grappling with their slum problem and have adopted in a number of instances important slum clearance schemes involving many thousands of houses.

In Bristol recently the City Council presented a report for the clearance of a slum area in St. James'. It proposed to clear this area in sections; as soon as one block of the dwellings now building in St. Jude's is completed some of the people will be removed from the condemned area to the new dwellings. This is a part of a scheme which it is hoped will be developed on a large scale.

The area proposed to be dealt with, Eugene Street, St. James', comprises a very congested district in which most of the houses were built in the early part of the 18th Century.

Hamilton is to spend £37,400 in demolishing an unhealthy area containing 120 old houses and erecting new ones on the same site. Coatsbridge is tearing down some 200. At Manchester a whole

street with 199 dwellings is involved in a clearance scheme. In this case, the inhabitants are to be moved to new houses elsewhere.

### BRADFORD

The Bradford Corporation proposes to rebuild a slum area in that city known as the White Abbey district. It is estimated that an actual expenditure of £235,766 will be needed to clear the site, of which it is expected the Government will contribute half. The scheme involves the clearing of over  $14\frac{1}{2}$  acres, of which  $10\frac{1}{2}$  acres comprise the really unhealthy area, the remainder of the land being included in the scheme to make it complete. The houses involved are occupied by 2,300 people, for whom it is proposed to build other accommodations while the area is being cleared.

### LONDON

In London the London County Council has proposed one slum clearance scheme for Islington where, to remove the insanitary areas, it is estimated that it will cost £34,500.

Another part of London, Bermondsey, is also proposing to demolish 151 dwellings in the Salisbury Street neighborhood, displacing 1,035 persons. The total cost of this scheme is estimated at £71,050.

Poplar, another district of London which has recently figured rather sensationally in the public prints from the political point of view, is also to come in for its improvement scheme. The London County Council has recently reported that conditions existing in the greater part of the Baker's-alley, Birchfield Street, and Bromley Place areas of that district are such that the evils can only be effectively remedied by means of an improvement scheme or clearance.

The area is roughly  $11\frac{1}{3}$  acres in extent and comprises about 51 houses occupied by 416 persons in all. It is estimated that the cost of acquisition and clearance of the three areas will be about £12,000, apart from the cost of erecting new dwellings to provide for the rehousing of those displaced.

### IN NEWCASTLE

The Newcastle City Council has recently been asked to push on with two big slum demolition schemes in Liverpool and Prudhoe

streets. The total value of the site to be cleared is estimated at £95,000.

### LIVERPOOL

The Liverpool City Council has under consideration a scheme for the clearance of 4 slum areas in that city. The cost is estimated at £135,000; 502 houses are proposed to be dealt with involving the dispossessing of 2,000 people.

In Seacombe, near Liverpool, it is also proposed to demolish 86 old houses and to erect 87 new ones in the Mersey Street area. The total cost is estimated at £45,000.

### IN SCOTLAND

The Edinburgh Town Council have approved an improvement and slum clearance scheme in the Cables Wynd District. The cost is stated to be over £386,000.

Work is also going on in the Cowgate-Grassmarket area where it is expected that 300 new houses will be erected upon the old sites.

### THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

In answer to a Parliamentary question some months ago as to the extent of slum clearance work going on in England, Lord Eustace Percy said that 86 Local Authorities were undertaking or had under consideration schemes for the improvement of slum areas, and that the annual contribution from the Exchequer towards the losses on these schemes would be approximately £127,000. The largest contribution would be made in the case of the London County Council, he said, who contemplated schemes involving a total annual loss of £100,000, of which half would fall on the Exchequer. A number of these schemes had already been confirmed. Schemes of considerable magnitude were also proposed by a number of the more important county boroughs, notably Liverpool and Manchester.

How large a problem still confronts England in dealing with its slums is indicated by statements by the present Minister of Health, Mr. Wheatley, in answer to a Parliamentary question the latter part of February, in which he stated that according to statistics obtained from the reports of Medical Officers of Health for the year 1922, 15,867 houses in England and Wales were found to be unfit for human habitation.

## THE COST OF HOUSES AND LAND UNDER THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME

Replying to a Parliamentary question, Mr. Wheatley the Minister of Health stated recently that the average cost of houses in contracts let by local authorities up to March first, last, excluding cost of land and development, was £368 for non-parlor houses and £421 for parlor houses.

That the average price per acre for the land purchased by local authorities for purposes of assisted housing schemes under the Act of 1919 was as follows:

<i>Average Price Per Acre</i>	<i>Areas of Local Authorities</i>
£286	London (L. C. C., City of London, and Metropolitan boroughs)
234	County boroughs
206	Non-county boroughs
209	Urban districts
126	Rural districts
206	All districts

## EMPLOYERS' HOUSING IN FINLAND

A Report recently issued by the Social Ministry of Finland gives an account of an investigation into employers' housing in that country.

The investigation covered 150 large industrial enterprises operating 222 factories. Of these, 133 industries have built houses for their employees. Of a total of 57,171 workers, 18,645 or 32.6%, live in houses provided by their employers. This ratio is double that which exists for industry generally in that country. Of the total number of industrial workers employed in 1920-1921, only 15.7% lived in dwellings furnished by their employers. It is evident that the larger industrial undertakings have been more active than the rest of industry in meeting their employees' housing needs, as was to be expected. Of the remainder of the industrial establishments, 17 had provided no dwellings for their workers, 115 had built dwellings ranging in number from 2 to 100, and 12 had provided from 100 to 200; the remaining 6 owned more than 200 dwellings each.



The inspectors, on whose investigations the Report was compiled, reported 38% of the houses as in good condition, 42% as satisfactory, 15% as fair and 5% as poor.

The most common type of dwelling was found to be the so-called "workers' barracks." Of these barracks, two types are differentiated. The older type, which is now said to be gradually disappearing, is a 2-story building having a corridor running through it, with separate rooms on each side, one room being assigned to each family. In addition to being unattractive they are dangerous in case of fire and lend themselves to the spread of contagious diseases, as well as having other hygienic disadvantages.

The newer type is a one-story building having 2, 4 and 6 apartments of one room and kitchen, closet and outbuildings. Apartments with two rooms and kitchen are also now becoming fairly common.

In addition to providing homes for married workers, a number of industrial plants have built homes for their unmarried help. These rooms, however, are not in the majority of cases fitted for light housekeeping, which is very inconvenient, especially for the women workers.

One firm has built two other types of houses—2-story row houses painted white with red tile roofs, and also detached 2-family houses painted red with white tin roofs. The row dwellings consist of a cellar, one room (with fire-place) on the first floor, and two rooms on the second floor. In addition to the kitchen garden each tenant has a right to a plat of potato-land at some distance from the dwelling. Work in the gardens is done under the supervision of a garden instructor employed by the factory management, so that the place resembles somewhat the so-called Garden Villages.

In most cases electric lights and a certain quantity of fuel are furnished free. Formerly the houses also were free, or were supplied as part of the wage payment, but this system is gradually being abolished in favor of the cash wage and the charging of rent, on the ground that the workers appreciate the houses more when they pay rent.

Rents vary greatly, sometimes being merely a nominal sum or one sufficient to pay for the upkeep of the buildings; in other cases rates current in the community are charged. Greater attention is gradually being given to the importance of providing gardens and garden instruction in connection with these housing

developments. Many establishments are said to be fixing their attention on this subject, some employing garden instructors whose duty it is, in addition to giving instruction, to stimulate interest in the cultivation of gardens by arranging for lectures, exhibits, the awarding of prizes, &c.

In an investigation into industrial housing begun by the Social Ministry and covering all industries in 1921, it was found that at the beginning of that year there were 13,715 dwellings provided by Finnish employers for their employees. Of these, 51% were one-room dwellings—as a rule a kitchen or room with a fireplace—but in a number of industrial enterprises the dwellings consisted of one room and a share in a common kitchen. About 42% of the dwellings have 2 rooms, and usually one room and a kitchen; occasionally dwellings of 2 rooms and a common kitchen, or 2 rooms without kitchen, are found. Only 5% of the dwellings had 3 rooms. Very few had 4 or more rooms. Buildings containing as many rooms as these are seldom occupied by workers, being usually reserved for foremen or superintendents.

## THE HOMELESS IN DENMARK

A report made by the United States Consul at Copenhagen at the close of the year 1923 gives the results of a survey of the housing situation made a few months earlier by the Danish Statistical Department. In the 50 principal towns, not including Copenhagen, there were at that time 1,675 homeless families, consisting of 8,971 individuals. In Copenhagen there were 2,801 homeless families, having 11,117 individual members.

“Homeless” families are those who are unable to find shelter for themselves and have been obliged to call upon the authorities for aid in this respect. They are accommodated chiefly in barracks or other temporary quarters and in some towns are sheltered in wards of public charitable institutions, while in other cases they are quartered in schools.

Denmark is the first country where such a situation exists to anything like to so considerable a degree. For a while there were similar conditions in England, but they were spasmodic and exceptional and soon passed. In commenting on the situation, especially in Copenhagen, it is stated that part of the congestion is due to an influx from the provinces during the winter months. In the hope of checking this movement a law was passed last May forbidding the leasing of apartments to persons who have a resi-

dence elsewhere, or whose last residence was outside of the city, without first obtaining the consent of the municipal authorities.

This reads very much like the royal Edicts passed in the time of Charles II in England who, after the Great Fire, issued a royal decree commanding all persons who had homes elsewhere to leave London and retire to those homes.

It is reported that this law, which was made retroactive and applies back as far as April, 1921, has thus far been practically a dead letter; but recently the authorities have decided upon a strict enforcement of it and it is announced that all families who have come to Copenhagen since that date and who are living in rented quarters under a lease or agreement which has not been approved by the Rent Commission, are liable to fine and to being ejected.

An investigation of the extent of building construction made at the same time showed that in 6 of the 85 provincial towns no private dwellings had been completed during the year. In the remaining 79 towns the number of apartments completed was 2,574.

A study of the number of apartments built in these provincial towns beginning with the year 1916-1917, shows that while up to 1919-20, the 2-room apartment predominated, since that time the 3-room apartment has been most common.

Commenting on this development the Report says:

This tendency toward larger apartments is especially marked during the past year when the number of 2-room apartments built was only  $\frac{1}{4}$ th that built in 1918-19. Of the apartments built in the last mentioned year only  $\frac{1}{10}$ th had more than 3 rooms, while in 1922-23, the number of such was  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total.

In Copenhagen a total of 4,524 new apartments were occupied during the year. Of these, 1,612 were put up by private builders, 2,429 by Building Associations and 483 by the State. The same tendency toward larger apartments appears in that city as in the provincial towns, though it is not quite so strongly manifested.

The survey as to the extent of the housing shortage and its distribution included 29 rural communities having buildings similar to city types. In 27 of these there were on October first, last, a total of 237 "homeless" families consisting of 1,231 persons. It is stated that, as it may be safely assumed that there are very few homeless persons outside of the districts included in this survey, the total number of homeless families throughout the



entire country of Denmark may be placed at from 4,700 to 4,800, and the number of persons from 21,000 to 22,000.

The results of the survey as a whole seem to show that there has been a tendency during the past 3 years to return to private enterprise.

In the provincial towns, in the years 1918-19 and 1919-20, approximately 1/3rd of the new apartments were put up by the state 1/3rd by Building Associations and 1/3rd by private builders. In 1922-23 the private builders put up 87.8% of the total. In Copenhagen the building operations of the state had been greatly reduced by 1922-23, and in the rural communities the private builder now occupies nearly the entire field.

## A HOUSING MUSEUM FOR AUSTRIA

An effort is being made by the Austrian Union for the Development of Housing Colonies, to found a museum which will include city planning, housing and allied subjects. An appeal has been made for funds, as well as for models, reproductions, plans, books, samples of material, etc. The purpose of this museum is to be educational and to show all classes of the people the significance and importance of housing colonies, from the points of view of economy and of social and intellectual phases. Traveling exhibits will be sent into towns and villages, including selections from the material collected in the museum. Furthermore, they hope to give in the schools, lectures illustrated by lantern slides and films. The extraordinary interest that the public has shown this year in the exhibits already made, not only in Vienna, but in the Federated States, justifies the belief in the value of such a permanent museum.

## IN VIENNA

Extensive building operations are being undertaken by the city government in Vienna, which has decided to construct annually during the next 5 years, through the expenditure of 400 million crowns, 25,000 houses, as well as a corresponding number of industrial establishments. These new houses, it is expected, will in 5 years make up the present housing shortage. The 400 million crowns required will be obtained, not through loans, but by regular municipal appropriations raised by taxation and other similar sources.



## THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN CALCUTTA

That housing problems are not confined to our Western civilization and have very much in common the world over is evidenced by the report that comes to us of the appointment of a Committee to Consider the Housing Problem by the Government of Bengal. This Committee was appointed some months ago to examine generally the conditions which operate to produce a permanent lack of equilibrium between supply and demand in respect of housing accommodation in Calcutta; and, secondly, to suggest in a general way measures that appear likely to offer some practicable solution of the housing problem, in spite of the financial stringency; and to enable improvements to be made in the communications between Calcutta and its suburbs.

The main issues arising from the terms of reference are stated as follows:

(1) To determine for the different classes of the community concerned, viz., the less prosperous European or Anglo-Indian, and the middle class Indian, the respective types of accommodation demanded by the members of their communities, and to consider what modification, if any, can suitably be made in these demands with a view to economy, and with regard to the rents payable.

(2) To consider the effect of land values and the Calcutta land system on the present housing situation, and possible measures for improvement.

(3) To consider what measures, whether legislative or administrative, can be taken by the Local Government, without the direct acceptance of heavy financial burdens, which would facilitate the provision and cheapen the cost of suitable accommodation of the standard demanded.

(4) In conjunction with the provision of additional accommodation, to consider whether such accommodation could most cheaply be provided at a distance from the centre of the city the cheapest and most effective means of transport between house and place of occupation.

The Committee generally agreed that in respect of large Indian houses, single houses in groups, and what may be called first-class flats (which the Committee have interpreted to mean those with a rental of more than Rs 300 a month), conditions have so far changed since the year 1920, that the supply is now comparable

with the demand, though in respect of such first-class flats, the prices asked for and paid are abnormally high for the accommodation provided, as compared with other places and countries. But the Committee felt that the occupants of these residences, though compelled to pay unusually heavy rentals, were in enjoyment of sufficiently large incomes to admit of their paying the rents asked, at all events without serious detriment to their health and efficiency and the Committee have therefore excluded them from consideration. As a result, the Committee have confined their deliberations to the following classes of the population:

### INDIANS

(1) The middle classes, housed as small families, often with sub-letting and with shops on the ground floor.

(2) Dwellers in *bustees* and tenanted lands with huts.

### EUROPEANS

(1) Population living in flats with rents varying from Rs. 150 to Rs. 300.

(2) Anglo-Indian tenement houses, *i. e.*, houses let out in small suites of rooms.

The above classification is based on the actual conditions of living at present and in no way implies that these should be perpetuated.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee may be briefly summarised as follows:

1. ECONOMIC POSITION. The ability to pay is a far more important feature in the problem of housing and communications now than it was three years ago, and it is useless to make proposals in disregard of this.

2. BUILDING. The whole scale of building, both for European and Indian houses, is at present unnecessarily extravagant. Buildings must be constructed on the most economical scale possible and for limited periods. A type plan for a single-story Indian dwelling is suggested.

3. LAND. The chief factor in the cost of housing is still the high price of land. This is due largely to the reluctance of owners to sell, and to the holding up of land through the absence of sound ideas of land finance.

4. It is essential that powers should be taken under the Land Acquisition Act for the compulsory acquisition of land for building purposes, both in order to render land available, and to afford security of title, the want of which is one of the chief obstacles to building enterprise.

5. Attention is drawn to the large area occupied by State lands and institutions, railway yards, residential schools and factories in the central and inner suburban area.

6. BUILDING FINANCE. The Committee recommends steps for the introduction of a better system of building finance, such as the encouragement of leasehold, the improvement of mortgages on property as a security, and the establishment of a property exchange.

7. Suggestions are made for the constitution of co-operative building societies to operate with the assistance of compulsory acquisition of land.

8. DEVELOPMENT BOARD. The Committee recommends the constitution of a new Development Board, with the double function of developing building land on a large scale in the suburbs, and of controlling and co-ordinating measures for the improvement of Calcutta as a whole.

9. As a temporary measure the Committee approves proposals for the extension of the powers of the Calcutta Improvement Trust to the suburbs, and trust that full effect will be given to this principle in the amendment of the Calcutta Improvement Act which is expected to come before Council in the near future.

## IN CHILE

On January 31st of this year President Alessandri laid the first stone of the coöperative workmen's colony at San Bernardo. A group of workers in the Government railway shops located in that town has, with the assistance of a loan from the pension fund, purchased a plot of 10 blocks, or 132 building lots, where picturesque and hygienic houses will be erected. The pension fund will loan the Coöperative 300,000 *pesos* a year toward the cost of building, while the Railway Council is also making some funds available.

## IN PERU

In Lima there exists a building organization which has as its motto "A home for every family." This organization builds houses for laborers and other employees, such houses being sold

on the installment plan at reasonable prices, some as low as 2.50 Peruvian pounds per month. The sales take place by the drawing of lots. During the first year of operation this organization, according to a report in the daily papers, invested several hundred thousand pounds in this work, and provided employment for thousands of laborers.

## TAX EXEMPTION IN MEXICO

A recent decree of the President of the Republic of Mexico extends to houses built in the federal district during the first 6 months of 1924, tax exemption from real estate and federal taxes somewhat similar to that granted by a previous decree.

Houses, dwellings and apartments renting at different monthly rates are given exemption for varying periods as follows:

Rent not more than	30 <i>pesos</i> ,	10 years,
Rent not more than	50 <i>pesos</i> ,	7 years.
Rent not more than	75 <i>pesos</i> ,	5 years.
Rent not more than	100 <i>pesos</i> ,	3 years.
Rent not more than	125 <i>pesos</i> ,	2 years.
Rent more than	125 <i>pesos</i> ,	1 year.

Buildings for stores in suburban sections and those for small work shops will come under the exemptions of this law, providing the monthly rent does not exceed 50 *pesos*.

An interesting provision is one which requires that houses whose monthly rent is more than 125 *pesos* must have a garden visible to the passerby, and at least one-third as large as the area of the ground occupied by the building.

## GOVERNMENT HOUSING IN QUEENSLAND

According to Premier Edward G. Theodore of Queensland who was recently in New York *en route* for London, the Labor Government of Queensland has expended approximately \$16,000,000 in the last 8 years in the erection of between 8,000 and 9,000 houses which have been sold to the people on easy terms.

Mr. Theodore, who has been Premier of Queensland—the second largest state in Australia—for nearly 9 years, explained that the housing shortage was quite as bad in Australia as elsewhere, and said that under the scheme to build workingmen's homes, the Government bought the land, erected the houses and then sold



them to individuals who paid weekly installments on a basis no higher than the ordinary rent. At the end of 15 or 20 years the workman owned his home.

Mr. Theodore said that this year Queensland is spending \$2,000,000 for this purpose, erecting 1,000 new dwellings to be sold in this way.

## RENT CONTROL LAWS

### THE LANDLORD'S SIDE

An interesting light on the whole rent situation as seen from the point of view of the tenement house landlord is found in a memorandum submitted to the State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning this winter by Stewart Browne, the President of the United Real Estate Owners' Association of New York City, an organization of several thousand tenement house landlords.

After making due allowance for Mr. Browne's point of view, the fact still remains that what he says has great significance for the entire country and should give the whole country pause. It would be wise if realtors throughout the country as well as social reformers take to heart much of what Mr. Browne has said in this memorandum.

We quote the following from it:

The Rent Laws originally were intended to prevent the eviction of law-abiding tenants willing to pay a reasonable rent, but they have degenerated into preventing the eviction of lawless tenants unwilling to pay a reasonable rent. \*\*\*\*\*

The bringing of new tenants, past and future, within the protection of the rent laws is the most dangerous thing that the legislature could do. It will increase every day the bitterness between landlords and tenant. It is an invitation to every tenant to refuse to pay rent, irrespective of the amount, and tell his landlord to bring him into court. The rent laws are rapidly changing the character of housing owners because the respectable element are daily selling out to the worst possible class of landlordism; and this selling out will increase daily, if all past, present and future new tenants are brought under the rent laws.

Frankly, my reason for favoring the extension of the rent laws is not because there is any shortage in housing space or

that without the rent laws landlords would require payment of unconscionable rents; but is due solely to the visualization that if the rent laws are not extended, the bitterness that has been engendered in the minds of housing landlords by the lawless acts of despicable tenants and by certain judges of the Municipal and Magistrates Courts, certain newspapers and politicians, easily 50% of the tenants of New York City would be turned out on the streets with their families, as soon as dispossess warrants could be obtained. The tenants in revenge would destroy the landlord's property before being forcibly ejected and many would have no hesitation in setting fire to such property.

The conditions between landlord and tenant as to the rent the tenants are paying, and as to the vacancies, was never more favorable since the Armistice than it is today; but the bitterness between landlords and tenants was never so dangerous and acute, and every day sees it becoming worse. Like the French forced occupation of the Ruhr, it will take 100 years for the Germans to forget their wrongs and it will take years for the housing landlords of New York City to forget theirs.

There is no present housing shortage in New York City. There is a shortage of housing at rents tenants are able to pay, but won't pay. Even in the cheapest cold water tenements, the occupants per room are much less in 1923 than in 1920. There are tenants with incomes of \$10,000 per annum and upwards paying rents of from \$6 to \$10 per month per room. There are thousands of tenants that won't pay \$10 per month per room. There are thousands of tenants that won't pay \$10 per month per room in walk ups with all improvements who pay \$500 and \$600 per summer season for shacks at the beaches. Ninety per cent of the overcrowding and "sleeping in shifts" is not from necessity, but due to the unholy greed of tenants who rent-gouge sleepers, boarders and roomers and who get from these unfortunates more rent per week than they pay per month to their landlords. The 1923 report of the Health Department as to shortage and overcrowding is a complete contradiction of the statements made by the newspapers, politicians and social uplifters. \*\*\*\*\*

Tenants are continually and viciously in apartments and

public halls (1) ripping off wall paper, (2) cutting holes in plaster of walls and ceilings, (3) breaking windows, (4) letting water overflow from bath tubs, wash tubs and sinks so as to ruin the ceilings underneath, (5) injuring plumbing, (6) breaking stoves, wash tubs and sinks to get new ones, (7) destroying door bells for deviltry, (8) removing mantel pieces to make more *per diem* sleeping rooms, (9) destroying gas fixtures to get electricity installed, (10) stealing electric lamps from hall fixtures.

There isn't a single species of physical destructive devilment that the human mind can conceive of that is not occurring daily in thousands of homes in New York City. For what? (1) so that tenants may go to the Tenement House Department and other municipal departments to make complaints to put the landlords to unnecessary expense (2) to get their apartments completely repainted (3) as an excuse for failure to pay agreed upon rent when non-payment proceedings are brought against them in the Municipal Courts.

Further, tenants use abusive and threatening language to landlords, their families and employees and even assault them. Some of them are "holy terrors" to other tenants, threatening them with violence if they pay rent or go to court to testify against them.

Tenants bring "fake" damage suits against landlords at the instigation of shyster lawyers so that insurance companies are increasingly cancelling their policies.

Tenants harbor prostitutes and dogs without number. One half of the tenants are making light wines and beer and are bootlegging. They erect radios on the roofs without consent.

It is almost impossible to get any tenant dispossessed for any of the above tenant actions. \*\*\*\*\*

Justice in the Municipal Courts has completely broken down. Speedy justice is impossible. It takes from 6 months to 2 to 3 years to get a jury trial. Many of the Justices are able lawyers and conscientious judges, but the conditions are hopelessly beyond them. Some of the Justices are not fit to sit on the bench because of their ignorance of law and because they are "politically wire pulled." Justice to them is a by-word. A few insult landlords and their lawyers alike. I know all about the court practices of shyster landlords and their shyster agents. I would put these in jail. But why



should a landlord be compelled at the cost of from \$50 to \$200 to put an expert on the stand to prove assessed valuation and building depreciation? Why be compelled to put on the stand every contractor who did work on a building during the past 12 months? The landlord must pay these men for loss of time. All these witnesses have got to go to court three, four or more times, until the final trial of the case.

The average landlord with 2 to 10 rent increase cases can't afford to pay these fees. Why should some Justices in the landlord's bills of particulars allow legal fees and others not? Why should an owner not be permitted to include management expenses whether he pays an agent or does it himself? A Justice has no legal right to take cognizance of city department violations, and even where no violations exist, take cognizance of repairs where the landlord hasn't agreed to make them—and adjourn the case for a week, fortnight, or month, and tell the tenant not to pay rent. Even a few reputable Justices, who know they have no legal right to do so, do it. \*\*\*\*\*

Judges and Juries accept tenants' statements without question, but refuse to accept any statement made by a landlord unless corroborated by other tenants, and tenants who are willing to so testify are bullied, threatened and even assaulted.

No decent law-abiding housing landlord can get square-deal Justice in many Municipal Courts. Knowing this, few decent landlords will go into Court to be harried, insulted and bullied. Two-thirds of the landlords have never been in Court and consequently their rents don't produce 5% net income on the assessed valuation of their property. \*\*\*\*\*

We regret that lack of space prevents us from printing in full this most interesting document.

## HIGH RENTS AND THE WORKING GIRL

An interesting sidelight on the social and industrial consequences of the existing high rents is found in facts brought out by Miss Cornelia E. Marshall not long ago at a conference of social workers to discuss the housing of the working girl who does not live at home with her family.



Miss Marshall, who is the very efficient President of the Association to Promote Proper Housing for Girls and is concerned, not with the poor but with the average working girl—the book-keeper, stenographer, milliner, teacher and factory girl—pointed out that such girls are buying less and eating less in order to have enough money out of their wages to pay the high rents charged for rooms.

Miss Marshall added that the women workers who must shift for themselves in big cities are thus forced to economize on food. She added that there are 50,000 girls and women trying to find suitable rooms in New York each year in the Manhattan district alone. Most of these have to try their luck with landladies; for, the organized homes have places for only 5,400. According to the last census figures there are 945,400 women and girls living in Manhattan and of these 342,518 are gainfully employed.

“The girl who rooms is the most unprotected of our division of girls,” said Miss Marshall, “for, her needs are not met by any church, club or settlement. She follows the advertisements in the newspapers to find lodgings and she has no idea what she is going to get when she goes out for a room.”

Miss Marshall told of two self-supporting houses that girls who room have organized under the guidance of her Association at 109 East 30th Street, housing 160 girls, and at 94 MacDougal Street, sheltering 35 with no supervision other than that dictated by their own good sense.

## A BETTER BASIS FOR BUILDING ACTIVITY

An interesting suggestion for a more scientific determination of the needs of the building industry and the application of sound business principles to the extent of building construction each year is found in a suggestion made recently by Christian G. Norman, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Building Trades Employers' Association of New York City.

The essence of Mr. Norman's suggestion was that periodic surveys should be made of the labor and material available in the building industry and that there then should be a scientific allocation of loans for building purposes by money lending institutions based upon the information and knowledge obtained through such surveys.

Explaining his idea Mr. Norman has the following to say:

From time to time some one in the community arises and suggests the need for several hundred thousand additional apartments. Agreed. We all know that more houses are required for the average wage earner. But how are they going to be supplied? That is the question.

It seems to me that if we begin from the premise that our available labor and material will, if used fairly efficiently, result in so many structures by the end of a year, we are starting to view the problem in a practical way.

Let us say that a survey, made by a competent body, reveals that so many men will be available in the building trades for next year. It can be estimated how much work these men would do in a year and so the number of new structures to come from their labor could be calculated.

Once the survey is made the heads of the money lending institutions might meet to consider the problem. If, with so many men and so much material, so many structures can be erected, the money loaning officials could determine the ratio of housing to schools and commercial structures. Arriving at such a conclusion and with the ratio of new buildings to be put up in the course of a year, the conference could then agree to refuse loans or buildings beyond the percentages arrived at as the result of the survey.

In the past we have attempted to put up buildings without knowing the amount of labor and material available. After all, a thousand bricklayers can only do so much work in the course of a year. Take the number of bricklayers and other mechanics available and see how much work they could complete, making a fair average for a twelve months' period. Then you will have something practical to work with.

At the present time a man may decide that his business would increase if he built a new structure. He may go into a market already overburdened with orders for labor and material. The result is instability, bonus conditions in the trades and disorganization.

## THE COST OF TRANSPORTING BRICK

As indicative of the degree of attention that is being given to all elements that enter into cost these days, is the latest idea contributed to the construction industry by the New York Central Railroad having especial reference to the transportation of brick.

The scheme devised by this railroad consists of using a specially designed railroad car that hold a series of 12 steel tanks, each large enough to hold 3,000 brick or one load. The car of empty tanks is run to the brick plant, the tanks loaded from the kiln or storage piles, and the run made to the city where the bricks have been sold. Here the train is stopped at one of the great team track cranes where heavy weights may be removed

from cars. Each tank is then picked up and held over a waiting truck, the bottom doors are tripped, and the 3,000 brick fall into the truck. From here they are rushed to the contractor, who handles them in the usual manner.

The tanks have covers on the upper side to protect the contents from the weather, thereby making it possible to make winter deliveries without the contractor having to remove a lot of snow before the brick can be used. The cars have a capacity of 140,000 pounds instead of the usual 80,000, and are specially built for this service. This method of handling brick is said to save all handling charges that are now incurred between the plant and the job, especially when New York methods are taken into comparison. This makes rail transportation cheaper than the barge service hitherto used.

It also speeds up the handling of brick from plant to job, cutting handling costs, and eliminates costs of delay and unnecessary demurrage charges.

## SEASONAL UNEMPLOYMENT

One factor in the high cost of building, as was pointed out in a striking paper by William Stanley Parker, Architect of Boston, at the National Housing Conference held in Philadelphia last December, is to be found in the seasonal unemployment of labor in the building industry, by which the industry is made to pay for the support of labor during its unemployed period.

Remedies for this situation and for employing building labor throughout the year in place of its present intermittent employment were suggested not long ago by John M. Gries, Chief of the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce.

Mr. Gries' remedy for the present situation may be summed up as follows:

By providing at least 3 leasing dates in each city during the year; dovetailing of contracts; means of protection of builders against declines in building costs; seasonal rates and prices; improved methods of work during winter and rainy weather; standardization of building materials; coöperation of building material dealers in ordering stock; surveys of housing needs; improved employment agencies; training of workers in trades that must remain seasonal, to permit the men to follow more than one line of activity; training of skilled workers in trades now short of men; and continuation of work while wage agreement negotiations are in progress.

## PERIODIC SURVEYS OF HOUSING NEEDS URGED

One of the recommendations which the U. S. Department of Commerce Committee on Seasonal Operation in the Construction Industry has made that is fraught with great value is that a periodical survey of housing needs, locality by locality, should be made throughout the nation. It is pointed out that such surveys, made at stated intervals, of actual housing needs and actual vacancies for each locality would enable residential construction to proceed on a more orderly basis than is now possible.

### A CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

The American Construction Council, which consists of a federation of all the elements that enter into the building industry, at a recent meeting of its central body and upon the recommendation of John M. Gries and D. Knickerbacker Boyd adopted the following programme or Declaration of Principles for its work for the immediate future:

1. The formation of a code of ethics acceptable to the industry and to the public.
2. The gathering of adequate statistics so that the industry may operate intelligently; while there are partial statistics collected by many sources, they have not been brought together and interpreted in the light of all the facts.
3. To establish and strengthen local organizations throughout the country, designed to attain the co-operation of the various elements in the construction industry in conformity with the principles of the American Construction Council.
4. A reduction of the national shortage of building mechanics and the establishment of the necessary apprenticeship system. To promote legislation and vocational guidance through the educational systems of the country increasingly raising the standard of efficiency and workmanship.
5. To cooperate in the establishment of uniform building codes throughout the country.
6. To cooperate with the railroads in expediting the revision of existing freight rates on construction materials, which the railroads are now undertaking.



7. To mitigate the evils of seasonal employment and the trade migration of labor.

8. The encouragement of local building shows and the adoption of a publicity programme capable of giving the public an adequate conception of the magnitude and work of the Construction Industry.

9. Simplification, standardization and elimination of waste.

10. Educating the public to the distribution of its construction and maintenance requirements more evenly throughout the year.

11. To promote health and safety of employees on construction work.

12. To reduce loss of life and waste of construction materials from preventable fires.

13. To study old buildings in order to make better new buildings, and particularly buildings being demolished in order to obtain practical knowledge of comparative depreciation of materials and thus to establish superior methods of construction.

14. To inform the public as to the necessity and economy of properly maintaining existing structures.

## REDUCING THE FIRE PERIL IN NEW YORK'S OLDER TENEMENTS

An interesting effort to cope with the real menace that exists in so many thousands of the older tenement houses of New York City constructed prior to the tenement house law of 1901—and therefore not sharing in the benefits and protection which that law affords tenement dwellers—was proposed in a measure introduced toward the close of the recent legislative session and sponsored by the Tenement House Committee of the Charity Organization Society of which Lawson Purdy is Chairman and John J. Murphy, Secretary.

This measure, introduced by Senator Dunnigan of the Bronx, amended the tenement house law by providing that all fire-escapes on the thousands of existing tenement houses in the city which are equipped only with stationary vertical ladders connecting the balconies from floor to floor, should have these stationary ladders removed and replaced with stairs at a proper angle. Tenement houses not exceeding three stories in height were not to be required to make this change.

Sweeping powers were proposed to be given to the Tenement House Department of New York City to permit it to require any

tenement house which in its opinion was not provided with sufficient means of egress in case of fire, to order such means of egress as in its judgment might be necessary.

The chief provisions of this measure are those which seek to protect dwellers in the older tenements from the hazard of night fires.

All students of fires and of building construction have known for years that the danger point in a multiple-dwelling is the public hall and stairs, which in the case of a fire act as a gigantic flue or chimney, the smoke and flames immediately reaching the stairwell and ascending through the building and spreading out or "mush-rooming" on each floor.

In order to cope with this situation the bill introduced by Senator Dunnigan contemplates that in the older tenement houses, viz., non-fireproof buildings erected prior to April 12th, 1901, and which exceed two stories and basement in height—and of which there are something like between 70,000 and 80,000 in the Greater City—that the cellar ceiling shall be covered with metal lath and plaster, thus acting as a fire retardent, the purpose being to slow up a cellar fire when it once starts and not permit it to eat its way through the upper stories before the tenants have time to escape.

Similarly, the bill proposed that the cellar stairs in such buildings shall be made entirely fireproof and enclosed with fireproof walls and provided with fireproof self-closing doors at both top and bottom. This would effectually shut off a cellar fire from the other parts of the building and especially from the stairs and halls leading to the upper stories.

What the expense of such a structural alteration would be in the average tenement house of this type is not disclosed, but it would undoubtedly be considerable; for it would involve removing the existing stairs, building new fireproof ones and building a complete masonry wall surrounding them and providing such walls with fireproof self-closing doors at the top and the bottom.

As a further measure of fire protection the bill contemplated that the ceiling of the first floor stairhall and the entrance hall and the soffit or underside of the first flight of stairs, viz., that leading from the entrance story to the floor above, shall be protected similarly with metal lath and covered with plaster.

The bill in question passed the Senate unanimously but reached the Assembly too late in the session to have favorable consideration

## THE CONVERTED DWELLING

Another measure introduced by the same sponsors—and intended to deal with the very serious evil of the old private dwelling converted for occupancy by 3 or more families, but without proper safeguards as to fire or sanitary provisions—added to the tenement house law a provision that would have brought such buildings under those provisions of the law that apply to tenement houses that were in existence when the new law was enacted in 1901, 23 years ago. By striking from the law the requirement that cooking must be done upon the premises in such apartments, the present evasion of the law which has become notorious, would be successfully met. This bill suffered the same fate as its companion and undoubtedly both measures will be renewed next year.

## IS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BUILD FOR THE WORKINGMAN?

Ever since the war there have been few houses built in this country for the so-called workingman, due to the high cost of construction. Most communities have stood helplessly by and felt that the only thing they could do was to drift with the tide and hope for the best; and that after a period of readjustment, prices would come down, and it would be ultimately possible to build houses once more which the workingman could afford to rent or purchase on the installment plan.

Although this period of watchful waiting has now extended for 5 or 6 years, the outlook for the future does not seem particularly bright, and it is not surprising therefore that an enterprising corporation like the Cincinnati Model Homes Company should have recently reached the conclusion to wait no longer, but to see what it could do to meet the pressing housing need in its community; and—notwithstanding high costs of building labor and material—attempt to construct a group of buildings that would be within the purchasing power of the working people of that community. H. Ginberg, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Cincinnati Model Homes Company, in a report to his Board of Directors made a few months ago, expresses as follows the reasons which led the officers of that company to embark on this undertaking:

You will recall your President's reports for the last 2 years on attempts made at new construction; that the tentative bids sub-

mitted by a few contractors would have made rentals beyond the reach of the average wage earner. The hopes for lower costs in material and labor were shattered with each award of an increase in wages and with each advance in the cost of materials. There was one avenue left open that inspired hope "to beat the devil around the bush" and that is to eliminate the middle man—the contractor—and carry out construction ourselves.\*\*\*\*\*

On the 11th of December last, ground was broken to carry the resolution into reality. With the exception of electric wiring and furnaces the material and labor for all other branches of construction is being purchased and hired by ourselves.\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*If we succeed in keeping the cost within the above figure (\$42,000) we shall have saved \$12,000 from the contractor's price, with better construction as an additional asset. However, we are not through with the speculative element—human labor. As an illustration; at the end of the first week the bricklayers averaged 1484 bricks a day per man; at the end of the 2nd week the average was only 780 bricks; at the end of the 4th week they averaged 1,500 bricks a day per man.\*\*\*

It will be interesting to see how this experiment works out and whether the Cincinnati Model Homes Company through close supervision and eliminating the contractor will be able to build houses that are within the purchasing power of the workingman.

## FORT WAYNE TO LEARN THE FACTS ABOUT ITSELF

Under the capable leadership of Albert H. Schaaf, one of Fort Wayne's leading realtors and business men, the Chamber of Commerce has perfected a constructive programme of work for 1924. This includes the following efforts:

1. To assist in securing the appointment of a city planning and Zoning Commission for Fort Wayne, whether it be an official or an unofficial Commission.

2. To make a complete survey of Fort Wayne as to the following:

- (a)—Number of new houses, both completed and under construction, built for speculative sale. The purpose of this investigation is to safeguard against a possibility of overbuilding.

- (b)—Number of houses available, and to become available, for rental purposes. Obviously the families for whom homes are now being built may render available a considerable number of houses which may be for rent. This information would be of great value in analyzing the housing situation.



(c)—The portion of people who own their own homes. An accurate determination of this would be of considerable benefit, particularly in the effort to locate new industries here.

In commenting on this programme E. R. Lewis, Publicity Director of the Chamber of Commerce, calls attention to the fact that many times a day or week there have come requests for definite knowledge concerning the things which a survey would make clear. But, in the absence of such actual information the answers have been far from complete, and unsatisfactory at the best.

Commenting on this programme Mr. Lewis says:

A checking up through the information department at the chamber of commerce indicates that this office has been besieged for information relative to the number of new homes, number of houses available for rental purposes, and for other facts which are necessary in the final analysis of our own housing situation. Accurate data would not be without its influence also in advancing substantial reasons why manufacturing plants and new industries should locate in Fort Wayne. The information given has been incomplete and fallen far short of its possibilities, but it was the best to be had.

## DO YOU KNOW THIS CITY?

The extent to which the press can figure as an agency for housing reform finds notable illustration in an editorial published in the *Philadelphia North American* some months ago where, under the heading "Do You Know This Philadelphia?" a striking comparison is made between the city which the average citizen knows and the real city which is unknown to most—except those who are unfortunate enough to live under these conditions.

What has been written thus strikingly about Philadelphia could be written with equal accuracy about every important city in the United States—and we commend to housing reformers generally, and to citizens interested in the welfare of their communities, that they look about them and find out if they are not living in a Fool's Paradise; and whether there are not in *their* city conditions exactly similar to those in Philadelphia, and whether it would not be wise for them to see to it that the great mass of the citizens of their community are made to realize that there are two cities there—one, that every citizen knows—another known to few, but full of potential danger to the welfare of their community.

This striking editorial is of such very great value for all communities in the United States that we are printing it in full.

There is a Philadelphia nearly every Philadelphian knows and is proud of. It is a city of well-paved streets—some of them beautifully wide and light—lined with fine business buildings or attractive dwellings, even the least pretentious of which are notably neat in appearance, and dotted with open spaces reminiscent of Penn's "greene country towne"; a city which flows northwestward to a vast park where nature is carefully groomed but not disarranged, and where the wide silver ribbon of a placid river enhances the scene delighting the eye.

This familiar Philadelphia presents fine vistas; offers unusual opportunities for healthful living and working and for recreation; evidences a love of home which testifies to solid citizenship, and fades into a fringe of suburbs fair enough to be famed in far lands. Indeed, one may find pictures of it in books written in foreign languages, and not infrequently do visitors from the other side of the world recognize certain buildings or groups from familiarity with such presentations.

It is a Philadelphia of clean, comfortable homes; of pride in house and garden; of such meticulous care even for exteriors that its gleaming front stoops have gained a place in literature. Its miles of little dwellings, so constructed as to admit plenty of sun and air, and amply supplied with modern conveniences, are the marvel of strangers. Its new parkway, with the new gallery for art slowly rising in the distance, impresses all visitors. Its great park is internationally known, and is a source of pride to its people.

This is the Philadelphia in which more than a million and a half Philadelphians find cause for satisfaction. They like to look at it and talk about it. They like to think it is different from other large cities, not only in ways that conduce to happier living, but also in ways that hinder health and happiness. Sometimes they shudder at thought of the distressing living conditions under which thousands of New Yorkers and Chicagoans live, and if faced with the fact that the death rate in this city during 1921—the latest year for which federal statistics are available—was higher than in either of the cities named, they would not be able to account for such a situation.

That is because most Philadelphians know little or nothing about another Philadelphia!

This other Philadelphia is not so easy to know as the less desirable living sections in New York and Chicago. It does not flaunt itself in tall tenements or "Hell's Kitchens" and the like. No one ever has written a book on how it lives; no Jacob Riis, backed by a Roosevelt, has bared its squalor and the pity of its ignorance and shiftlessness, exploited by greed. Every now and then a welfare agency reports on some phase of its miserable condition, and with faithful regularity the Philadelphia Housing Association details the

existing state of affairs, but such revelations are hard to remember unless one sees—or smells—them at the source.

It is because the average dweller in this city has no occasion to use some twenty miles of built-up but unsewered streets, or squeeze thru narrow alleyways into dingy, dirt-strewn "courts" where some 60,000 men, women and children are crowded in veritable coops, that this other Philadelphia is not well known to him.

The city government which is commissioned by this average dweller, knows it, however. It knows the location of the 10,000 and more privy vaults on such streets, for their records have been kept in the health bureau since 1914. The city has known for over ten years that thousands of houses have an inadequate water supply; that the pressure is low during daylight hours; that alley and court houses have no inside supply, and often a hydrant in a court is shared with three or four and sometimes six neighboring families. The city knows there is a teeming population in narrow alleys and courts and minor streets, approximating 60,000 persons; that children must play in long narrow passageways or streets where traffic dangers levy their toll in human life and maimed bodies; where subtle attacks on morals break down character and destroy virtue. Such places are a blight that do not improve, but rapidly become worse.

Yet how many Philadelphians know that the 4837 tenements and the 2465 rooming houses recorded are far below the actual number of such properties within city limits; that families, like rats, have taken to cellars to cook, eat and work; that many are housed in attic rooms, where the blistering heat of summer makes life almost unbearable; that this intensive occupancy has driven four, eight and ten families into houses of as many rooms each to carry on all household activities in an apartment of only one room?

The city knows, moreover, that widespread nuisances prevail, and that the congested occupancy forced by inadequate supply of houses and increasing population tends to increase the number of nuisances, and at the same time constitutes a major cause of disease and crime, as is proved by the following record—one of many similar cases submitted to the public within the last decade, and covering the four-year history of seventeen families living in one tenement:

Sickness—Hospital and contagious cases, 51; tuberculosis, 14; babies diseases, 8; skin and venereal diseases, 5; mental illness, 6; blindness, cripples, etc., 5; minor illness requiring medical attention, 23. Total, 112.

Crime—Immorality, rape, etc., 8 cases; abuse of children, 6; deserting husbands, 5; theft, 6; beggars, 5; brawls, 2; delinquent boys, 4; drunkenness, 6. Total, 42.

This tenement is about 100 feet long, 65 feet wide, four stories high, with a central court eight feet wide upon which 102 windows open and a side alley four feet wide upon which 35 windows open.



It is a firetrap of 96 rooms for 43 families, many of whom cook, eat, sleep and entertain, and take care of their sick in apartments of one or two rooms only.

The halls are dark and narrow. Lights are kept burning all day. Stairs are thirty inches wide. There is a fire pail, usually empty, in each corridor. The toilets are foul smelling; sunlight enters into very few compartments.

From personal knowledge gained within a week the writer knows this description is so uncolored as to barely reflect conditions as they exist, and that it does not have to do with a single instance, picked for propaganda purposes, but is fairly representative of a widespread situation which menaces not only the health and morals of those directly involved, but reaches out into the Philadelphia of which we are proud and in insidious ways works damage there.

It may surprise the dwellers in this laudable Philadelphia to know, from such an authority as Bernard J. Newman, director of the association above named, that thousands of Philadelphians are so badly housed "that it is doubtful if the equal in insanitation and squalor can be found elsewhere in this country."

The areas of such housing are widely scattered, tho most of them are in the older parts of the city. Outside of the tenements, the houses are mainly of the handbox type—three stories with one room on each floor—and usually are minus even an excuse for a yard.

Sunlight is minimized and block ventilation retarded. They are hot in summer and damp in winter. The rooms are small, thousands of them having scarcely more floor area than eight or nine feet by ten or eleven feet, into which the stair well juts. In large numbers of such "homes" there is no inside water supply. Not less than 30,000 Philadelphians occupy such buildings.

As said above, nearly all such conditions are known to the city government, and there are laws which cover the case in nearly every instance. Why, then, should such conditions remain uncorrected?

"In some cases the ignorance of tenants is responsible, and in other cases fear of consequences prevents them from reporting insanitation," says Mr. Newman. "Another factor is the greed and ignorance of owners, which cause delays that prolong certain defects and add additional costs for repairs. Often the indifference of absentee owners and their misplaced trust in agents increases insanitation. In a measure, economic conditions are responsible. High material and labor costs, which inhibit the erection of the low-priced house so common a decade ago, have reduced the supply of such dwellings and forced the conversion of older buildings into apartments to provide cheap rentals. But, in the final analysis, a large measure of the blame for present conditions rests upon city officials who have been elected and appointed to administer the affairs of the city."



This tireless worker for better housing conditions has as high an estimate of the value of decent homes to a community as any one of those residents of the better Philadelphia we have described. He says:

The house is a powerful influence for good or evil in the lives of its occupants. If it is structurally safe and in a sanitary condition, it protects its tenants from certain safety hazards, or from exposure to conditions that would tend to lower their vitality or bring them in contact with organisms largely responsible for causing disease. If it is overcrowded or dirty, if it lacks adequate light and ventilation, is damp and attracts those insects that are carriers of disease germs, it is a menace to public health. The effect of housing defects may be of only gradual growth, but it is none the less certain to appear. The only safeguard against its occurrence is the elimination of the cause.

None can better appreciate the truth of this statement than he who lives in a clean, safe, comfortable home, such as hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians enjoy. Nothing such a home dweller can do will more surely advance his own welfare and that of his community than insistence on the speediest possible correction of such evils as make this other Philadelphia not only a menace but a disgrace. To this end it is expedient public opinion should stand squarely back of an extension of the present clean-up to include eradication of such insufferable housing conditions as are responsible for a large share of the lawlessness and crime now being attacked by the new administration thru General Butler.

## HOUSING IN WASHINGTON OF THE FUTURE

In the Preliminary Report of the "Committee on Housing and Reservations for Future Housing" of the Washington Committee of 100 on the Federal City, three leading recommendations are made as follows:

1. It is desirable to house as large a proportion of the population as possible in one-family dwellings.
2. Every legitimate means should be used to safeguard investments in one-family dwellings, and so encourage such investments.
3. Multi-family houses (apartment houses) have a recognized place in large cities. They provide shelter for families without children, for unattached individuals and for some families who do not expect to make Washington their permanent place of residence. Consequently adequate provision should be made for them with a minimum of injury to the more important one-family dwellings.

In discussing the Washington situation the Committee through its chairman John Ihlder states that there are six outstanding points in the Washington housing situation as follows:

1. Securing an adequate supply of dwellings for families of moderate or small means.
2. Rehousing the alley dwellers.
3. Protecting private residence districts from apartment house invasion.
4. Assuring that apartment houses shall be so planned that one will not injure another.
5. Estimating the area available for future housing and indicating measures which will give constructive guidance in the development of such areas within the District of Columbia and in the contiguous sections of Maryland and Virginia.
6. Improving the quality of construction so that new dwellings will not deteriorate unduly within a few years, or costs of repairs and maintenance become excessive.

Thus a future housing programme for the District of Columbia has been outlined and gives those interested in housing reform in that locality something to work toward.

## START YOUR BREAKFAST FROM YOUR BEDROOM

In all my new homes, from \$6,750 to \$50,000, I will so electrify the house that merely by pressing a button in your bedroom you can start your breakfast in the kitchen. By the time you are dressed, your oatmeal will be cooked, the water boiling for your eggs, and your coffee ready. Not only a convenience and a time-saver, but an innovation that will still further enhance the value of the always up-to-date McClatchy homes.

JOHN H. McCLATCHY

The above advertisement appeared not long ago in a Philadelphia newspaper. This is an interesting indication of the kind

of attention that is being given by progressive and intelligent developers of communities to the needs of clients.

Mr. McClatchy has long been a leader in the production of highgrade, wellbuilt homes and has taken a pride in producing houses that give a sense of satisfaction to the people who live in them. With this kind of a device for starting breakfast made a practical matter in every home, it will not be long before the almost effortless existence which friction writers have anticipated for some years past will be a thing of reality.

## IS THE PLASTERER DOOMED?

In our February issue we reported the invention in Scotland of a machine to lay brick which was said to have been so perfected as to be entirely practical. Now comes the news that facing the exorbitant demands of the plasterers—who are now earning \$25 a day and upward through all kinds of bonuses owing to the great demand for plasterers and the shortage of mechanics in that trade—a machine has been invented that will do the plaster work of an ordinary house so economically and expeditiously as to make the employment of many plasterers a thing of the past.

It is reported that W. H. Van Tine, architect of Henry Ford's residence at River Rouge, buying a farm near Scarsdale, N. Y., and having decided to remodel the house, was horrified at the cost of the plastering, both for the outside stucco and for the interior. At about the same time it appeared that the Japanese Government advised a Japanese architect in New York City, Yasuo Matsui, that it had heard of a mechanical device that would greatly facilitate reconstruction of the devastated cities of Tokio and Yokohama and that the Japanese Reconstruction Commission understood that two coats of mortar work for interior and exterior alike could be applied, each with a single operation by one man who thus was enabled to do the work of 8.

A test was arranged of the new device and a wall surrounding the Van Tine house, 222 feet long by 9 feet high with frequent gables, was plastered outside with wet ready-mixed mortar in 2 hours and 35 minutes, applying a three-eighths inch veneer. A combination interior and exterior slab test was arranged in New York for the benefit of the Japanese Government's representative and for city and state officials, housing experts and members of Commissions as well as representatives of large construction corporations.

The test conducted in New York early in February applied 773 square yards of wet, previously-mixed, batch mortar plaster coats by one man in 8 hours as against this man's out-turn of 80 square yards a day. In the test one man plastered and 5 laborers supplied him with material; and experts qualified to state, declared that that man was able to do the same work that 8 plasterers, with 6 laborers to keep them supplied with material, normally do in a day.

Other tests demonstrated that a heavy scratch coat on wire lath, felt and paper, at the rate of 1,280 yards could be laid in an 8-hour day by one plasterer, which is the equivalent on the present average basis, experts said, of 10 men's daily work. An exterior dash coat was applied over 2240 square yards as against a normal present day rate of 70 square yards a day.

Within a month, said Mr. Matsui, the Reconstruction Commissioners of Japan will be testing them out there, orders having been issued following the demonstration.

## STANDARDIZING METAL LATH

Another important development in reducing cost by eliminating waste is announced in the standardizing of sizes and types of metal lath by the Associated Metal Lath Manufacturers as a result of a series of conferences and tests carried on through the Simplified Practice Department of the U. S. Department of Commerce for over a year past.

More than 80% of all groups in the Metal Lath Manufacturers have adopted the simplification recommended, which reduces the 125 varieties to 24 flat expanded,  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch expanded and flat rib expanded metal lath. The various manufacturers have been putting the reductions into force for some time.

A pamphlet describing these new standards is now in the hands of the Government Printer and will shortly be available for persons interested. Thus one more building material becomes cheaper to use through the intelligent action of the Department of Commerce, and metal lath adds its number to the army of standardized products which have heretofore embraced various kinds of brick, hollow building tile, prepared roofing, range boilers and a number of household articles.

It is estimated that savings of millions of dollars have been effected by this simplification and it is announced that more than 100 other industries are planning similar action.



## A BOOK OF PLANS

A new House Plan Book recently issued by the Portland Cement Association replaces the Association's initial book "Concrete Houses," published last year. The new book illustrates and describes 40 different designs intended to be constructed of concrete block with Portland cement stucco. These designs have been prepared by more than 30 prominent architects from the Atlantic to the Pacific and show houses which come within cost estimates ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000.

In addition to showing plans for houses, the new book describes methods of concrete masonry construction, the use of stucco, and discusses fully various concrete building units, such as concrete block, brick, structural tile and roofing tile.

A price of 50 cents is asked for the book. Working drawings and specifications covering all the plans in the book will be available at nominal cost through the Portland Cement Association, 111 Washington Street, Chicago.

## BUILDING CODES IN CITY DEVELOPMENT

The National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, with headquarters in the Transportation Building at Washington, has issued an interesting 12-page pamphlet entitled "Building Codes in City Development." This pamphlet deals with the fundamental requirements of a building code and should prove of very great help to smaller communities where building codes are somewhat of a novelty.

## THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT

### HARDWARE AND LIGHTING FIXTURES

Robert Taylor Jones, whose valuable and penetrating article on "40 Ways in Which to Reduce the Cost of a House" we published in a recent issue, has recently rendered a similar service to the small home builder and owner by discussing in similar fashion the considerations which the home builder should bear in mind in selecting the hardware to be used in a house as well as the lighting system. This advice is so valuable that we are sure that our readers will be keenly interested in it and we are therefore printing in

full Mr. Jones' article which appeared in a recent issue of the magazine *The Small Home* of which he is Associate Editor:

When you start out to figure the cost of building your house, there are certain things which can only be covered by a lump sum. You do not know how much you will spend for these items, so in order to make sure that a sum sufficient to cover them will be set aside, you include in the contract a statement like this: "The Contractor will allow \$100 for this item." The understanding is that if more should be spent, you will supply the additional money, but that if costs should run under the sum allowed, the savings would then go to you. This is the way hardware and electric light fixtures are usually provided for.

It may interest you to know that ornamental tile work, the rate per thousand for face brick, and other things of the kind that cannot easily be definitely determined in advance, when the general contract is let, are also provided for by this lump-sum allowance.

Suppose then that you have made an allowance of \$100 for your finish hardware. How will you go about spending it? How will you get the greatest value for your money?

Your local hardware dealer will help you with this matter. Just gather up your blue prints as soon as possible after building has begun, and take them down to him. Have him list all the locks, catches, hinges, and so on that will make a complete installation for your house. When he has done this, get him to show you the catalogues illustrating all the different kinds of designs. You will find that you can have knobs, escutcheon plates, catches and other pieces in a wide range of designs, some of them following the architectural styles. Thus, your Colonial house can be equipped with hardware in the Colonial style, and so on. You can make a selection not only of the style you want, but also of the metal in which you wish to have it made. Probably the hardware dealer can show you from his stock the actual piece that you have selected from the catalogues.

You will find that most of the hardware is made in cast steel, cast and wrought iron, brass and bronze and some other especial alloys. Some of the steel and brass shapes are pressed from sheets of the metal. Some of these articles are cast. The cast metal is

more sound and more expensive than the pressed metal. There are two forms of black metal. One, a solid rustless iron is much superior to the other. You can have most of the metals in a polished or dull finish as you prefer.

It is a trite saying that all is not gold that glitters. This applies to hardware as well as to many other things. For example, your dealer will show you different kinds of metals finished in various ways. Steel with a brass finish—brass with a bronze finish and so on. Many of these finishes are brushed coats — that is, they are plated on. They come off parts that are subject to wear, like the door knob, almost — but not quite — as easily as they go on, so that after a time the highly ornamental finish that you started with gives way to the honest brass or steel below. After all the brass looks pretty well shining through there — so much so that you think it might have been better if you had started out with the brass and finished with it.

### PUT BEST LOCK ON THE KITCHEN DOOR

Let us see what equipment you should have in the way of hardware. There should be fastenings at all doors and windows, and casement adjusters for windows of that type, and the doors will have to be hung on hinges, or as they are more properly known, butts. Of course you will have a cylinder lock at the front door. Now, as a matter of fact, you need a good lock more at the back door than at the front. It will be a great convenience and a real protection to have such a lock on the back door. If you can order your hardware in advance, the contractor will get back and front door lock sets so that they can be operated by the same key.

Pick out the hardware for the front door, and elsewhere for that matter, that harmonizes in design with your home. Do not be carried away by a set of hardware that is attractive for itself alone. It is the right combination that counts. Get the carpenter to place the hardware on the various doors, drawers and windows where it will harmonize with the design of these things. He must realize that this must be done without cutting into the tenons that hold the parts of the door together. It takes a real workman to do a good job of hardware setting.

For the front door and perhaps for the communicating doors on the first floor, it will be desirable to have the hinges or butts of the ball bearing type. For closet and bedroom doors and other

doors which will have light usage, the ordinary friction butt will serve very well. It is very important to have three butts on every communicating door. For the slightly increased expense the doors will swing much more true. The closet doors can get along very well with one pair of butts. Door butts may very well be of cast steel finished in imitation finishes to match the solid metal of the knob, for they are not subjected to wear and the plated material will save some expense.

### WHY LOCKS FOR DOORS THAT ARE NEVER LOCKED?

It has long been a question with architects why people should have doors throughout the house so completely equipped with locks. Why, for example, should all the closet and bedroom doors have locks? Did you ever lock your bedroom door? Probably not. It may be more desirable to put locks on closet doors. Do not put a lock on the door just because it is a door. Perhaps after all you will never lock it. In any event, a bolt on a thumb turn will serve all the purposes of a lock and you will not have a key to look after. However, it should be said that a mortised latch will usually cost more than a bit key lock. Of course if you have a small boy in the house, you will want a lock on the pantry door. Some people have thought it desirable to have one closet in the house equipped with a good cylinder lock. Such a closet may come in very handy at certain times, perhaps if for nothing else as a place in which to store the family skeleton.

Perhaps one of the places where especially good hardware is necessary is at casement windows. There are numerous types of casement adjusters. The very cheap ones will not give you much satisfaction for very long.

### ELECTRIC FIXTURES

Another one of the items that is provided for in the contract by means of a fixed sum allowance is that for the electric lighting fixtures. These are installed at about the same time as finished hardware. You have already given thought to these when you worked out the electric lighting details with your architect. If you did not check it all over at the time the electrician was putting in the work, you missed an opportunity to make sure that you were going to have exactly the lighting and conveniences that you desired.



The problem now confronting you is to select lighting fixtures that will give you real illumination and at the same time add some element of decoration to your home. These fixtures are made very largely of metal and glass. The metal is usually of brass, finished to imitate the hardware of the rooms. Thus one color note dominates the metal work in all directly adjoining spaces.

It is perfectly proper and sound to have imitation finishes on the lighting fixtures. There is no real hard wear on them. Besides, after the finish is applied it is coated with a transparent film of shellac that will resist everything, except soap and hot water, for a number of years. If the chandelier becomes dusty, it will generally be found satisfactory to brush it off or to wash it quickly with clear water. Otherwise the shellac will be washed away and the metal will quickly oxidize or stain.

The carpenter puts on the hardware. The electrician hangs the lighting fixtures. If the electrician does his work properly, the fixtures are securely attached to the fastenings provided for them. The canopy which covers the outlet box will not rattle at the least shaking of the floor, and the fixture itself is properly grounded so that there is no chance of your getting an electric shock from it. One of the little things that often go wrong is the setting of the switch plates. There is no excuse for their setting out of line as they often do. Of the switches themselves, you may have a number of different types to suit your own ideas of convenience. Be sure to make your selection of fixtures early enough so that they can be finished like the hardware.

## GOOD TASTE ADDS VALUE

When you realize the unlimited possibilities of the fixture designer with an endless supply of brass tubing of various sizes at his command, together with bits of clear and colored glass, metal castings, paint, gold, silver, gilt and so on, you can perhaps comprehend the wide extent of fixture designs that are evolved. Perhaps this explains also why there are so many absolutely ugly lighting fixtures. Some are cheap and flimsy, and some are substantially made and beautifully designed. You do not want electric fixtures that will not be in good taste.

Do not think for a moment that you cannot get good designs unless you spend a lot of money. Just remember that you will be better pleased with your house as you go along living in it if the

things are simple. Try to pick out fixtures that will harmonize with the architecture, with the hangings in the room and with your own good taste, and have them finished to correspond with the finish of the hardware. Don't try to "jazz" your rooms up with lighting fixtures.

In selecting the fixtures you should take your plans to the fixture display room as you did to the hardware dealer. The salesman will help you to make a complete selection, and if he considers your best interests he will sell you designs that are appropriate for your house. Of course you can get fixtures made to order for your rooms by interior decorators. The extra expense for these special fixtures is not great and you then have the satisfaction of knowing that all the little matters of design that you want carried out will be properly observed. However, if you are thinking, as many small home builders are, of keeping the expense down to the smallest possible figure, you will have to be content with the ready-made fixtures.

Do not try to have too many finishes. Perhaps one type of finish for the first floor with the exception of the kitchen is enough. The second floor may be finished differently, but they may be generally alike throughout excepting for the bathroom. In the kitchen and bathroom you should have glass or chinaware in combination with nickel plate.

### WORKMANSHIP COUNTS HEAVILY

When all this hardware and fixture work is installed go around and see that it works properly—especially the hardware. See that the doors swing properly, that the locks work as they should, that the catches snap into position without forcing the door. If they do not work well, they probably will never work properly. Get them fixed now. You need only tell the contractor about it and he will adjust them.

It is difficult to say just how much the hardware and electric fixtures should cost with respect to the whole cost of your home. The amount appropriated to these purposes range all the way between 2% and 5% of the whole expense. The limits of your pocketbook must guide you.

Thus, once more, there is the combination of good material and honest workmanship to think of. The combination is the Gibraltar of sound building.

## SELF-DETERMINATION IN HOUSING

What is hailed as a new idea in the building of workingmen's dwellings has been put forward by the General Motors Corporation of Flint, Michigan. In launching a gigantic house-building plan, it is stated that workmen will be permitted to choose their own lots, draw or furnish their own plans for a home and have exactly the kind of house erected for them that they desire. A very small amount of money will be required for initial payment on the part of the employee, the company loaning the greater portion in order that he may have the kind of house that he wants, and pay for it by the month in lieu of rent. It will be interesting to see how this plan works out. Where it has been tried in the past there has generally resulted those heterogeneous, nondescript, patchwork colonies that have been an eyesore to the community, and have not made for increased contentment on the part of the workingman or been a good real estate investment.

Self-determination has its limits, and the success of a housing development depends largely upon the intelligent skill and good taste with which it is developed and managed.

## HOUSING FOR NEGROES

Members of the Birmingham Real Estate Board were told by realtors and property owners recently that improved housing facilities for negroes would tend to hold negro labor in the south and improve the quality of that labor and in the long run bring better returns to both owners and realtors.

C. D. Barr, who has done much welfare and labor work for the American Cast Iron Pipe Company, told of results that were noticeable in the building of better homes for negroes. He said that the construction of 52 houses, equipped with sanitary arrangements, with walls papered and otherwise made more habitable, led to a distinct improvement in the quality of the labor of the tenants and tended to keep them from joining the recent Northern exodus.

If the shortage of labor throughout the country caused by the restriction of immigration and the consequent emigration of negro labor from the South to the North and West has the result of impressing upon employers of labor in the South the great desirability of better housing conditions for their help, it is a byproduct that is very much appreciated.

## STANDARDIZED SERVICE IN APARTMENT HOUSES

The Baltimore Real Estate Board has recently discussed a new scheme for eliminating much of the difficulty that arises between landlords and tenants who express dissatisfaction when they move from apartments where telephones, window cleaning, window shades, electric light bulbs, redecorating, &c., are included in the annual rental charge to buildings where these items are not included, and the tenant is required to stand the cost of them in addition to the regular rental.

Members of the Board believe that establishing a uniform standard for such services as are included in the rental will bring about an elimination of the present difficulty. The idea is a novel one and is undoubtedly in the direction of present-day tendencies in all matters, which are more and more toward standardization where practicable.

## POPULARIZING HOUSING

How great an interest the housing question has assumed for the entire country is to be found in the great number of magazines and journals, outside of the technical and trade journals, which have found it advantageous to develop housing service departments or bureaus by which information on various phases of the housing question is furnished to their readers.

One of the most recent of the larger magazines to undertake such a service is *Hearst's International* which has its Home Builders' Department headed by Dr. A. P. McMahon. In addition to conducting a department each month in the magazine, it has given wide publicity to a number of effective pamphlets and documents that have been issued by other organizations. One of these is the article on "40 Ways to Lower Home Building Costs" written by Robert Taylor Jones, Technical Director of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau at Minneapolis and published originally in the *Small Home*, the journal issued by that organization and also published in *Housing Betterment*, issue of January, 1923.

*Hearst's International* has already distributed over 20,000 of these pamphlets, which not only contain the 40 ways by which building costs can be reduced, but also some excellent typical floor



plans and elevations of small houses built from the Small Homes Service Bureau's plans.

Another monthly magazine with large circulation which carries a housing department as part of its regular service to its subscribers is *McCall's Magazine*, which includes on its staff of advisers in this important branch of its work such well known architects as Ernest Flagg, Grosvenor Atterbury, Aymar Embury II, Dwight James Baum, F. L. Ackerman, W. B. Chambers, Clarence Stein, Miss Marcia Mead and others. It would seem as if the time were soon approaching when no popular magazine will be complete without its Housing Department.

## DO WOMEN MAKE FINAL DECISION ON A HOME?

Even though men may pay the bills in the end, decisions on a home are usually made by the women.

This statement is not based upon guesswork or hearsay. If the Small House Service Bureau movement has proved only one thing, during its three years of service, it is the fact that the buying power in the home building market is represented by feminine tastes and decisions.

It is easy to understand why such things as closets, convenience outlets, linen chutes, step and labor saving devices, and other time and labor saving equipment play so important a part in the selection of a home plan and the erection of a house. Women are demanding more and more little things, which perhaps do not appear to count as essentials from the point of view of a man, but are nevertheless highly important in getting house work done with the least possible expenditure of effort and time. For this reason, the whole idea in modern home building is toward smaller homes, and more space and labor saving equipment.

## AS WE SEE IT

For the past three years the Architects' Small House Service Bureau has served as counsellor to thousands of home builders. We have arrived at some definite conclusions about what influences people in the selection of plans, building material and home equipment. We think we know something about the buying power in the home building market. We know the average length of time required for people to make decisions. Thousands of questions come into our national as well as regional bureau offices.

These questions point clearly to the fact that the buying power is the woman, at least nine times out of ten, as far as smaller homes are concerned.

## A BASIC INDUSTRY

Home building is a basic industry. It is one of three absolute necessities—food, clothing and shelter. People must eat, must be clothed, and must have protection from the elements. Certain conditions, such as the money market, prices, strikes, supply and demand, influence the volume of business, but after all, shelter is a necessity for which there is an increasing demand.

Each day tons of earth are taken out of the ground to prepare for foundations upon which will be erected thousands of smaller homes. These homes will require bricks, lumber, shingles, heating plants, insulation, paint, furniture, and a hundred other commodities necessary to the comfort and convenience of the occupants. This demand for smaller homes is like a great incoming tide which never ceases to reach a shore line every twenty-four hours. No matter what happens, this tide never fails to come in.

## FIFTY TRADES AND INDUSTRIES INVOLVED

Each day this great incoming tide changes. It represents buying power and a new market. It rolls up like a huge breaker and spreads millions of dollars onto a wide shore line. Each day thousands of people are ready to make decisions and take the step that may spell disaster, disappointment, waste, loss of money, or success, savings, good investment and happiness, depending upon how carefully their decisions on vital points are made.

Just think of it! More than fifty distinct trades and industries profit in the erection of one small home.

Statistics show that from two and one-half to three years pass between the time the average home builder first becomes interested in erecting a home and its completion. What does this time element mean to home builders, to merchants, to manufacturers seeking markets for their products?

## HOME BUILDERS DEMAND DETAILS

Our observation of the home builder—and we know him as well as almost any other organization in the country—is as follows:

He spends many weeks and months drawing sketches, investigating, studying plans, materials, equipment, new devices. Decisions are not made instantly. The money to be spent for a small home may represent savings of a lifetime. Facts are demanded. Home builders want to be sure about all details. They want questions answered. While the element of cost, or the amount of money that people can afford to pay for the erection of a small home, influences to a large extent the selection of the type of home and equipment, at the same time little unexpected things very often influence final decisions, and as I have said, those final decisions are usually made by the woman.

For example: Only recently, and after many weeks of study, which included comparison of a group of home plans, a decision was made by the woman in the case, based upon the number of miles to be saved each year in walking to and fro in a kitchen. This woman had studied kitchens so carefully that a routing of steps to save labor and time was her hobby. She demanded a working kitchen arranged to speed up housework and to give her sufficient time for community and social work. She found that the placing of a kitchen sink so that it would save a foot or two of needless walking every time she went from the sink to table would save approximately one hundred and thirteen miles of unnecessary travel each year. Counted in hours this meant more than two weeks' time, which she could spend profitably at other work.

This is perhaps an extreme case, but I mention this merely to point out that a house plan is one thing, and a house planned to incorporate those features that assist women in time and labor saving, is quite another thing, and women are recognizing the difference.

### WOMEN ARE VITALLY INTERESTED

Women are interested in materials. They want to know about bricks, lumber, shingles and cement. They want all the information they can get about materials, equipment, plans. They are willing to read most everything they can get their hands onto that has a bearing upon that particular commodity. They want this information in useful form. It will be seen, therefore, that in rendering service to prospective home builders, certain clearly defined facts must be reckoned with.

First, the home building industry is basic. Buying power is the woman. The market changes each day. The tide, which repre-

sents this market, may increase or decrease, depending upon economic conditions. Nevertheless, it never fails to come in, and represents an enormous amount of money. The service which best influences the expenditure of that money is one which clears away home building mysteries and points out construction facts in useful form. That service cannot be void of a reasonable amount of sentiment. It is a basic fact that home building is founded on sentiment. Therefore, the service, whether it be through letter, personal contact, or through advertising by merchants and manufacturers, must contain a certain amount of warmth and sentiment. And perhaps more important than any one of the things I have mentioned above is the time element of three years, which indicates that the construction industry, from the architect down to the last trade that leaves a small home before the occupants move in, must persistently, day after day, week after week, present proper argument and well organized service to this immense buying power, if it hopes to enjoy its proportionate share of the millions of dollars that market offers.

MAURICE I. FLAGG

Architects' Small House Service  
Bureau of the U. S., Minneapolis

## STEEL WINDOW SASH COMING INTO USE

Housing reformers have for some years past advocated a greater use in America of the English type of casement window, but until recently have not found a sash on the market that was sufficiently economical and at the same time practical from the point of view of keeping out rain and standing long service. With, however, the standardization of window sash, both of metal and wood, and the greater utilization of light weight steel for all kinds of purposes in the building industry a new type of steel sash for small homes has been put on the market, a Philadelphia company now making a specialty of proper sizes for homes.

It is stated that the sash is designed not only for ease of operation but for long durability, and appearance has been taken care of in its design. The right sizes have been provided and the price is within the means of the ordinary home purchaser. The sash opens outward and permits adequate ventilation and protection without interfering with any of the needed functions, and is



said to be both weather-tight and air-tight and easy to operate, and one that may be locked in several positions to give ventilation at different stages, without letting in the rain.

## A FOLDING DINING ROOM

Another interesting device by which space is saved in the modern home is found in the "Fold-Away Dining Room" manufactured in attractive form by a company in Virginia. This consists of a refectory table with two dining seats, one end of each of which is attached to the wall and folds back into a pocket six inches in depth.

With the greater utilization of the "dining alcove" this device seems to fill a long-felt want by providing all the space needed for a small family—the table will seat four comfortably—and yet at the same time not necessitating the providing of an additional room, which has become a very important factor with the present high cost of building construction.

## AN EIGHT INCH WALL ONE BRICK THICK

An interesting development of the hollow type of brick wall is found in the latest type of Fisklock brick construction. With the new unit it is possible to do away with the common brick backing on an 8-inch wall, and a hollow wall is secured that is said to be as strong as required and which is at the same time heat-proof and moisture-proof and costs less than a wall built by ordinary methods.

Each brick, made the same as a face brick, has three horizontal air cells, and interlocking grooves and lugs. It measures 8 by 8 by  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches. When these bricks are properly laid, the mortar joints are broken at the center to stop the passage of moisture, the air cells are isolated and the wall fills all strength requirements.

## HOW THICK NEED HOLLOW TILE WALLS BE?

In line with the studies that are being made by the Hoover Building Code Committee as to the *performance* of building materials—so that building codes may be written with reference to performance and not by rule of thumb guesswork—are the recently announced results of a series of tests carried on for some time by the U. S. Bureau of Standards of the Department of

Commerce, on the performance of hollow tile as a building material.

Wasteful use of building materials, with a consequent increase of the cost of construction, is often due to a lack of knowledge of how much load such materials can safely carry. Avoidance of such waste can be brought about by furnishing the building industry with reliable data as to the strength of the different materials used and of different types of construction. Consequently the results of the recent tests carried on by the Bureau of Standards as to the performance of hollow tile are of especial interest to the building industry and to all persons interested in reducing cost of construction.

A series of 32 different tests were made on walls of hollow tile. These walls were 4 feet long by 12 feet high and were different thicknesses, viz., 6, 8 and 12 inches thick, representing the outer wall of a house.

One interesting result of these tests is the fact that it brought out that considerable differences in the strength of the tile did not have an appreciable effect on the strength of the walls. Another interesting result was disclosed in that walls having the cells of the tile vertical had on the average more than twice the strength of those having cells horizontal.

Persons interested in the technical aspects of these tests will be able to obtain a copy of the Report from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., price 5 cents. The document is known as Technologic Paper No. 238 of the Bureau of Standards and is entitled "Some Tests of Hollow Tile Walls."

## THE ART OF HOME-MAKING

An interesting announcement has been made recently by the authorities of Northwestern University at Evanston, Illinois, of an endowment of \$100,000 for the maintenance of a professorship in Home Arts.

While the detailed plans of this new Department have not as yet been worked out and remain to be developed in connection with the University's larger plan for the education of women, the following paragraphs from the deed of gift are not without interest:

In order that the young women of Northwestern University may, in years to come, gain the knowledge essential to making homes

attractive, I desire to give to Northwestern University, property to maintain in perpetuity a professorship or an instructorship.

The income shall be used for carrying out that purpose, for instruction in those arts directly related to making home life more perfect, and to making the home more beautiful and attractive, and to provide for competent instruction in specific subjects relating to home decoration and furnishing and clothing designs, with equal consideration for the artistic and economic phases involved.

## LABOR AND HOUSING

It has long been a source of wonder that organized labor in the United States has comparatively taken so little interest in housing—an attitude that is in striking contrast to the position of Labor in England where housing is one of the main planks in the labor platform and has become a leading political question, due largely to its advocacy by Labor.

While it is true that organized labor has always been friendly to better housing conditions, it has never felt it to be part of its direct work and its interest in it has only been incidental.

It is interesting and encouraging therefore to find a labor organ in New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Labor Review taking a very active interest in housing, and running a series of articles in its organ discussing the need of better homes for workingmen in that state. In a recent issue there occurred articles on the following topics "Wage Raise—Rent Raise." Another article "Workers Build Homes" describing the work of the Quaker City Construction Company in Philadelphia. Another "Tenants Organize." Another "To Aid Home Building" being an account of action taken by the Boston Conservation Bureau and an article dealing with the new Chase Family Homes Association.

Another issue contains in parallel columns a summing up of the advantages of Home Ownership—to employers on the one hand and to workmen on the other—and in an earlier issue, as illustrative of the purpose back of this movement, the journal carries this slogan:

New Hampshire is dependent upon industry, thrift, and home ownership for the maintenance of industrial peace, prosperity and good citizenship. When it is possible for every workingman to acquire a home on terms not more burdensome than a rental basis, the pressing social and economic problems of the day will have been met in a large degree.

## FINANCING HOMES ON PERSONAL CREDIT

It has for some time been a source of surprise in connection with the difficulties that have been encountered by workingmen in financing the building of their homes, that some one has not sooner suggested the idea of financing such home building upon the basis of the personal credit of the man who is to own the home.

For years much of business has been conducted on such a basis, and the system of lending money on so-called "two-name paper" has flourished for many years, although where it has been done carelessly and without proper investigation such schemes have come to grief. The idea has on the whole been uniformly successful and serves as the basic principle of the so-called "Morris Plan Bank"—a chain of banks which now function throughout the country and represent a very large capitalization.

The application of this idea to the financing of workingmen's homes has recently been carried out in practical fashion by the Chamber of Commerce of Gardner, Mass. There, acting through the Housing Endorsement Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, 102 men of that community have signed an agreement which makes it possible for the Committee to endorse loans up to the sum of \$102,000. As stated by Tudor W. Bradley, Manager of the Gardner Chamber of Commerce, this plan helps the average man to own his home.

Business men of Gardner, each with his personal liability limited to \$1,000, and which is not binding upon his heirs or his estate, have signed an agreement making it possible for the Endorsement Committee "to go on paper" up to \$102,000. According to Mr Bradley the plan works out as follows:

The man wishing to build a \$5,000 house must have at least 10% (\$500) to invest in the home himself. The savings or co-operative bank, under the Massachusetts law, can loan a maximum of 60% of the proposed value, which would mean \$3,000, on a first mortgage from this source. The \$1,500 necessary to completely handle the transaction is then borrowed on a personal note given by the home purchaser and indorsed by our committee to some bank. A second mortgage is given by the home purchaser to the indorsing committee for their protection.

Payments are required on the second mortgage to be made monthly direct to the bank. These payments are so arranged that the second mortgage will be paid off in from 5 to 9 years.



We have not as yet sustained any losses under this agreement and every payment has been made when due. We find that the moral encouragement given to those who desire to own a home has been one of the greatest benefits of our plan, because many individuals would like to own a home but are doubtful of having a sufficient amount of money with which to complete it.

We believe that by encouraging people to own their own homes and having a plan by which we can assist them, we have been responsible for one of the biggest building booms this community has ever seen.

The town of Gardner and its public-spirited business men deserve great credit for giving this object lesson to the entire country of a practical way of solving the housing problem—insofar as the shortage of capital is concerned. No plan that has been proposed in recent years seems to us to get so closely to the root of the question, and we believe that every community in the country which is suffering from a housing shortage will find it advantageous to copy this plan and put it into operation.

## CO-OPERATIVE TENEMENTS

America has been very slow to follow the example of England in the development of true co-operative housing. Notwithstanding the very great success of the co-operative movement in that country, there has been until recently very little effort to adopt similar plans in America.

With the high cost of building construction and the uncertainty and fluctuations in values of new buildings, the co-operative apartment house, intended for occupancy by very well-to-do people, has been developed to a rather striking extent in recent years, especially in New York City, and is likely to spread as a method of housing in all parts of the country.

Until recently, however, there has been little development of similar schemes for the wage-earner. It is therefore with very great interest that we learn of the success of a true co-operative tenement house development in greater New York in different sections of that city. Almost unknown to the general public, more than 500 families, it is stated, hold partnerships in two of these projects and live in apartments costing them only \$21 to \$50 per month, of which \$10 a month is applied to the purchase of the apartment, the remainder covering upkeep and interest charges on the investment.

These are true 100% co-operative apartment houses, managed by a board of tenant directors, each house tenant having a vote, a very different thing from many of the so-called "co-operative" apartments in which the stock is held by a group of tenants who rent apartments to others.

One of these groups of co-operative tenements is occupied by a colony of Finns in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Another consists of 5 co-operatively conducted tenements in East 102nd Street, Manhattan, and another, the Beekman Hill Homes in East 50th, and still another the Workmen's Co-operative Home in upper Lexington Avenue.

### "KERNEL" HOUSES

In an interesting article describing recent housing work in Austria, Ewart G. Culpin, British Town Planner and former Secretary of the British Garden City and Town Planning Association, describes an interesting aspect of the housing work that is now going on in that country, and more particularly in Vienna and its environs.

In describing this situation Mr. Culpin says:

In Vienna there are said to be 34,000 people wanting houses, whose needs are never likely to be satisfied. The municipality is building about 2,000 apartments, consisting of a room and kitchen, at an average cost of ninety million crowns, or about £300. To provide a part of this money a building tax is levied upon all old buildings, based upon the rental value of the premises. All those with a rental of K. 3,000 pay a building tax of 100% and for each K. 3,000 another 100% is levied, so that the figure goes up to 3,000% of the rental value.

Practically the whole of the new housing work in Austria is being done through the "settlement" schemes, which, to a large extent, owe their existence to the work of the Society of Friends, and the desire of that body to give their relief in some shape which would have permanent results, and actually help people to help themselves instead of merely pauperizing them.

The great need of Austria after the war was for food and houses. The new Austria is so carved up that 95% of all the country requires has to be imported, and the prices which

are demanded are beyond the resources of the ordinary folk to pay. Therefore the Quakers decided to settle the people on the land, build them a modest home, little more than a hut, and let them raise food for their consumption and for trade. Vienna possesses an enormous quantity of land in its town forest, the admiration of many English municipal councillors who have visited the city; timber exists in unlimited amount, and the capital has been provided by the Government, by the town, and by the settlers themselves in co-operative effort.\*\*\*\*\*

The settlements are springing up in every direction in the outer environs of Vienna, and other organizations are following the lead of the Society of Friends. There are at present about 50 of these settlements, some larger and some smaller, but all contributing to the vital necessity of the city and the country—the production of food—proving that it is possible, even within the diminished borders, to support a healthy population. Attached to the settlements are central farms which are co-operatively managed, and there are also co-operative workshops, where thriving industries are becoming established, and where the joinery, household utensils, and furniture for the settlers are made at a lower rate than they can be purchased outside.\*\*\*\*\*

The settlement work started in 1921, and by last spring 600 houses had been built. The money allotted by the State and the city provides for the completion of 1,050 houses, all on a co-partnership basis. The State has voted K. 8,000,000,000 and the city K. 50,000,000,000, with an extra five milliards for experimental purposes. All the experimental work is done by a society formed by the central association, and known as the Gesiba, formed of the initials G. S. B., of the building co-partnership. It was found that the societies, and indeed the Government, were entirely unable to secure building materials at reasonable figures, and, as was the case in Belgium, a central purchasing agency was set up. All building materials are provided by it, and not only has it been able to get its own material cheaply, but the result has been greatly to reduce the demands of the trusts. Its efforts have been in the highest degree successful.\*\*\*\*

The scheme seems to have many interesting features. One of

these is the provision by which the money is only loaned to the settlers and not given. Mr. Culpin says that it is a striking testimony to the abundant success of the scheme that it is possible for 25% of the Friends' Mission Loan to be returned last year out of the profits, and it is hoped that 50% will come back as a result of this year's harvests. The money thus liberated is being used as a revolving fund, being applied to further loans and in stocking new settlers. The Friends have established 400 families on the land and their waiting list contains another 4,000.

One of the most interesting features of the whole scheme is that by which the settlers pay for their houses by voluntary labor rather than by money. As described by Mr. Culpin this works out as follows:

It appears that each settler before getting a house has, in addition to a small monetary payment which in some cases is supplied on loan by the Friends, to give 2,000 hours of voluntary labor to the settlement, either as bricklayer, laborer, clerk or what-not, and as all classes are involved a new order of existence is being worked out. Laborers, brain-workers, artisans, artists are all involved and all needed and it is reported that this voluntary labor idea has been abundantly justified.

The most interesting feature of this work for American students of housing is the so-called "kernel" house, or seed house. As the name implies, it is the beginnings of a house, but so planned that it can be put up by the exertions of a family and added to from time to time as means permit. It is intended that the building shall proceed in 5 stages which Mr. Culpin summarizes as follows:

First stage. Construction of "kernel" house, covering a floor area of 290 sq. ft. including the provision of stairs to the loft, which may be omitted at this stage. It provides a kitchen-living room with folding bed, a bedroom with two beds, closet, toolshed, and loft.

Second stage. Shows the transformation of the loft into an attic bedroom with three beds.

Third stage shows the addition of outhouses.

Fourth stage. Here two double bedrooms are added to the ground floor, with a loft over, and the double bedroom of the first stage is converted into a single bedroom and a scullery.

Fifth stage. Where necessary, the new loft can also be transformed into a second double-bed attic.

Mr. Culpin adds that the completed house thus develops into a



complete settler's house of 5 rooms and scullery. He states that the cost of this "kernel" house for the first stage is at present from 22 to 30 million crowns, according to whether it is detached or semi-detached, and as to what is done for a stair-case. The free labor of the settler reduces this cost by about 7 million crowns. The completed house costs about 50,000,000 crowns of which 10,000,000 crowns may be saved by settlers' work. In English equivalents these figures are £60 to £70 for the first stage, and £150 complete. The labor saving is from £22 to £31, which on the wage basis given previously is about equal to two-thirds the trade union rate.

Summing up the work of the Friends' Mission in this rehabilitation scheme, Mr. Culpin gives the following figures, and says:

The whole details are fascinatingly interesting for anybody concerned with real reconstruction—as opposed to mere relief. There are 423 families housed, consisting of 1,681 people. The settlers gave 3,725,523 hours of voluntary labor, a good deal of which was on houses not then occupied. They raised 1,153½ tons of produce, 320,000 litres of milk, and 564,300 eggs. The central farms on 304½ acres raised 408 tons of crops. The co-operative industries carried on comprised, needlework guilds, carpenters, locksmiths, painters, electricians, glaziers, shoemakers, founders, etc.\*\*\*

He adds that it was expected that during 1923 nearly 700 additional houses would be provided in each of which would be another family. The figures given above therefore have to be multiplied by nearly 3 to get an idea of the position of the scheme at the end of the year 1923.

## STANDARDIZING PARTS OF BUILDINGS

The American Engineering Standards Committee with offices in New York reports that much progress has been made in certain European countries in standardizing the parts of all dwellings, notably in Austria, Belgium and Germany.

In Austria standard dimensions for wooden stairways and constructional details of stairways, as well as for wooden windows, frames and their constructional details and wooden doors—have all been worked out and these parts of buildings have been manufactured on these new standard sizes with very great economy.

Similarly in Belgium, standards for concrete construction have also been worked out. Germany has been very much to the fore in standardizing parts of small dwellings in much the same way as Austria.

## A VACUUM WALL

A new type of hollow brick wall is said to have been devised known as the Simons Vacuum Wall, controlled by the Simons Brick Company of Los Angeles. As described, this wall consists of specially molded brick, similar to the Ideal wall, but which are said to be more completely hollow walls. In the new type of wall every sixth course is tied together by means of oval-ended brick that fit in molded recesses in stretcher brick, while the intervening courses are built with ordinary common and face brick. The tie brick take the position of headers but do not show on the face of the wall. As there is a generous dead air space between the inner and the outer wall, the structure is said to be well protected from outside temperature and dampness. To aid in the moisture-proofing one end of each tie brick is frequently treated with a water-proofing compound.

## A BASIC BUILDING CODE

### IN OHIO

How to control and regulate building conditions in the sparsely settled districts of a state outside of the larger cities, has been a problem that has vexed all students of the building industry for many years past. It would seem now as if a solution had been approached at least in the creation of the Ohio Board of Building Standards which became effective last October. The functioning of this Board is designed to place legislative restrictions and standards for building on a reasonable common sense basis that will accord with modern economic conditions and recognized modern technical skill in the production and use of building materials, and architectural and engineering skill in the design of structures.

The law under the authority of which this Board was organized, speaking broadly, provides for the revision of the Ohio State Building Code and other state laws regulating building and sanitation and their equipment; for making uniform the existing requirements of law imposed by various departments under the police power of the state; for the writing of legislation to regulate the construction of buildings not regulated by the state code or by such requirements; for the supervisory centralization of building regulation in one state activity; for the making of building regula-

tion reasonable in its imposed requirements; and particularly for creating lawful machinery through which building regulation may be kept abreast of building progress and practice without recourse to legislative action.

This law is not a detailed building code, but defines the principles of and is in itself a basic building code. It is thus in line with the best recommendations of modern practice as embodied in the basic building code of the Hoover Building Code Committee.

Its defined purpose is that all buildings except single-family and two-family dwellings "shall be so constructed, erected, equipped and maintained that they shall be safe and sanitary, for their occupancy."

The Board has a membership of 7, two of whom are state officials and 5 are appointed by the Governor, and thus has on it representatives of the State Department of Health, the State Labor Department and similar departments vitally interested in this work.

The Ohio State Building Code which was one of the earlier state codes enacted, having become a law 12 years ago, has not proved, in practice, to be a great success and it has been very doubtful whether any state building code could be enacted that would prove successful in practice.

It would seem as if the new scheme held within it possibilities for a successful administration of building regulation throughout a state. Its future will therefore be watched with the very greatest interest by all those interested in the building industry and in its progress.

## MILLIONS OF FEET OF LUMBER WASTED

Startling facts with regard to the waste of lumber due to lack of intelligent demand on the part of the public were presented by Theodore F. Laist, architectural adviser of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, not long ago in Washington. Mr. Laist pointed out that there was a waste of approximately 140,000,000 feet of sawed timber annually, due to the insistence of the public on buying only lumber sawed to even lengths. He stated that this represents the average annual growth of over 2,000,000 acres, equal approximately to one-half the area of the state of New Jersey.

In discussing this question 310 examples of house plans were analyzed to show that the consumer actually, although he demands

even lengths, saws over 50% of joists purchased into odd lengths. The plans on which this conclusion were based can be divided into 5 groups, those which may be classed as (1) better class homes designed by architects, (2) ready-cut houses, (3) builders' designs, (4) plan books and builders' plan service, and (5) high grade architects' plans.

In the first group, 57.3% of the joists were odd lengths; in the second, 55%; in the third 61%; in the fourth 55%; and in the fifth 50%, making an average of 54.5 in all examples examined. The percentages which could have been saved had the builder been able to purchase the joists in odd lengths would have been, respectively 4.3, 4.4, 5.1 and 3.6.

In the light of these disclosures it behooves the architectural profession to reconsider its designing of houses.

## SELLING BUILDING MATERIALS ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN

The high cost of materials and construction generally have led to much searching of building methods and the development of many improvements in connection with the building industry.

One of the most interesting suggestions that have been made recently is that which comes from Theodore F. Laist, architectural adviser of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association to the effect that the building material interests of the country should create an instrumentality for selling their commodities on the installment plan.

This is in effect a new and apparently economical way of financing the second mortgage which has always given much trouble, and which, if it should be put into operation, will eliminate a large part of the initial cost that most present deferred payment plans impose on home builders, who have not enough cash to make up the difference between a first mortgage and the cost of the house and lot.

At a recent convention of the Ohio Lumber Retailers Association this suggestion was offered by Mr. Laist as a means of increasing the lumber dealers' sales. Discussing this problem, Mr. Laist has the following to say:

My own observations have led me to believe that the average man and woman are already sold on home ownership, and that if a



means were devised by which they could realize their desires the volume of new business would be so enormously increased that it could not be handled.

Important as are own your home shows, model houses, advertising, publicity of all kinds, they all sink into insignificance compared with the importance of making it possible for the man with small capital to finance a home without being at the mercy of the loan shark and being stung by some unscrupulous speculative builder.

We sometimes forget lines of merchandising other than that of the automobile, in which the total sales volume has increased so enormously within recent years. Had it not been for the deferred payment, plan, pianos, phonographs, washing machines and other costly instruments or utilitarian appliances for the home would never have found the wide distribution they have, even in the homes of those of the most humble means, in which they have come to be regarded as a necessity.

There was a time when buying on the instalment plan was a practice which was not in favor with the thrifty. In fact, to buy on the instalment plan was not considered quite respectable. Today it is nothing unusual for men of large means to buy on payments. There was also a time, not so long ago, when it was not considered quite the thing to live in a rented house—a man who could not own his own home was regarded as falling short of one of the best requisites of good citizenship. In the early days of the instalment business, which in truth was conducted on a low plane, sharp practices and all sorts of trickery were resorted to to catch the unwary and reclaim the goods after large payments had been made.

And now we come to the financing of the second mortgage, the most important of the methods by which the building of small homes may be stimulated. The financing of the first mortgage need not be stressed at this time.

A group of lumbermen, material men, general contractors, sub-contractors representing the plumbing, steamfitting, painting and electrical trades, &c., get together and organize a second mortgage loan company in which each one subscribes to the capital stock. This company will function primarily by assisting those desiring to build homes by financing the second mortgage; secondary functions are providing plan service if necessary, financing the first mortgage if desired, and providing contractors.

When an individual applies to the company for a loan those members of the group interested bid in the usual manner on the plans for the work. When the contract is awarded it is awarded in the usual way on the usual conditions, but with the one difference, viz., that instead of exacting full cash payment from the owner each contractor or sub-contractor agrees to take in second mortgage notes his percentage of whatever money may be needed to bridge the gap between the first mortgage and the money the owner has on hand. These notes he accepts at par. Ordinarily he would have to peddle the notes and sell them at a large discount, the price

being fixed accordingly. In this plan he endorses the notes, turns them in to the loan company and receives in cash the face value of the notes less a small fee.

The loan company, therefore, has collateral with the building as security, paper with the name of the owner and the name of the sub-contractor as additional security. Whenever the loan company needs funds it may borrow on these notes as collateral through banking channels and the loan company will guarantee these loans. I have been told by officials of large banking institutions in Chicago that they would gladly accept such paper with a guarantee of the loan company and loan by far a larger per cent. than they would ordinarily on second mortgage notes, which in fact most banks will not take at any price. The reason for which is obvious, because the paper of this loan company is more secure. In the first place, there is the guarantee of the loan company, but above that is the fact that the second mortgage actually represents physical property and is not merely floated for the purpose of paying fees, percentages for financing, &c.

## “LABELING” OR “LIBELING” BUILDINGS— WHICH?

Maritime law has a practice by which a ship is “libeled”, or “attached”, in litigation where it is necessary to get hold of tangible property.

A recent suggestion made by F. W. Fitzpatrick, a consulting architect of Chicago, for the “labeling of buildings” in the interests of fire prevention partakes of something of the same nature.

In a letter to the *American City* magazine Mr. Fitzpatrick has the following to say:

The whole fire situation could be absolutely controlled by the insurance people. They have given a hand to fire prevention, and now have experts, engineers, bureaus, all at work bettering conditions. I would ask them to take another step—a more drastic inspection of buildings, particularly the public and semi-public ones, theaters, hotels, offices, factories and such. A fire-door found blocked open, old hose dried out and useless, rusted stand-pipes, sprinklers and such equipment should subject a building to increased rates—a species of fine; a second offense or failure to do as notified, cancellation of insurance—and you have much of our fire loss right in hand. Costs something, yes, but worth it. A bit heavier premium to pay for inspection, but after a time all premiums could be lowered. Even repairs could be done by the insurance companies—repairs or replacement needed in fire equipment—and charged to the owners of buildings. All the companies are, together, virtually one affair, and the underwriters, as a body, have

autocratic power by reason of their rates and schedules. If they really want to reduce fire losses, let them prove it by initiation of this system.

It may take time to secure requisite legislation or authority, for the owners of cheap buildings will object, but the cities—urged by insurance—can do something else we have clamored for for years, something most effective—the “labeling” of buildings. Classify them and label conspicuously at their main entrances. “Fire Resisting,” “Ordinary,” “Dangerous.” Note the alacrity with which the man with “Dangerous” over his door will revamp and better his building so as to meet a higher classification; or he will tear it down altogether and build decently.

Then we can urge legislation that will amend our system of taxation. Now, the more a man spends on his building, the better he builds it, the safer it is, requiring the minimum of city protection, fire departments, water pressure, and all that, why, the greater his taxes! Change all that so the fellow with the old, inflammable tinder-box of a building—requiring the maximum of city protection and constituting the greatest danger to all surrounding property—will pay the higher rate of taxation.

It is passing strange, but interesting withal, that in all reforms the masses have to be compelled to do certain things by authority and the authorities have in turn to be compelled to apply these compulsory measures by the weight of public opinion; public opinion in turn is molded, created by printers’ ink; and I know of no cause that deserves better at the hands of the press than does this one of fire prevention.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHT

Primitive man, living in caves, built fires of wood, which was the earliest form of lighting. Following is an outline of the progress of lighting from the days of the caveman up to the present time:

5000 B. C.—Torches or lighted splinters placed in holders of stone or clay.

1450 B. C.—First artificial lighting by “fire pans.”

300 B. C.—Lamps made of brass or bronze became highly artistic.

50 B. C.—Romans used rushes soaked in grease—forerunner of the candle.

300 A. D.—Phoenicians introduced candles in Constantinople.

400 to 1700 A. D.—The candle, tallow or wax, vies with lamps or lanterns.

1700—Grease, vegetable or fish oil lamps with wicks begin to be used.

1780—Whale-grease or fish-oil lamps equipped with round wicks and glass chimneys.

1800—Gas lighting perfected.

1850—Discovery of petroleum revolutionizes oil-lamp lighting.

1879—Edison, apostle of light, invents incandescent electric lamp.

1885—Auer von Welsbach produces incandescent gas mantle.

1895—Incandescent electric lights made with carbon filament in growing use.

1923—Incandescent electric light, using tungsten filament, in high state of perfection.

## NO WORKERS—NO HOUSES

One of the important factors in the present housing shortage and the high cost of building is the shortage of available skilled workers in the different building trades which makes it possible for a limited number of workers to practically command any wages that they desire. It is not strange, therefore, that we read of bricklayers and plasterers getting \$25 a day and upward.

There has been a very keen appreciation of the dangers of this situation in the last year or two especially on the part of the architectural profession, and also on the part of the building trades themselves, and organized efforts are being made throughout the country through Building Congresses to stimulate the training of young men in the various building trades or crafts.

No person has been more active or more effective in this field than has D. Knickerbacker Boyd, the Philadelphia architect, and executive Vice-President of the American Construction Council. In a recent address entitled "Guidance and Training for the Building Crafts from the Standpoint of the Architectural Profession", Mr. Boyd points out the great need of instilling into the youth of the country an interest in taking up a career as craftsmen which he distinguishes from that of the mechanic or the machine laborer.

Mr. Boyd's address holds so much that is of interest and value to all those interested in the housing problem that we are quoting



from it quite fully and only regret that lack of space prevents our reprinting it in full. Mr. Boyd on this occasion said in part:

After hearing much discussion along these lines I could not refrain from making a plea for the building crafts. I asked them why they did not try to arouse the interest of the boys and girls under their charge in the art and science of building. Why did they not teach them to attach more dignity to manual labor, to achieving results with hands and heads working together? Why they did not inspire in boys more regard for the badge of the building worker—the overalls or some more significant uniforms, and so on.

I cited the interest which architects should have in craftsmanship and in cooperating in the education of craftsmen as well as of draftsmen, and the influence this would bear upon all the crafts—stimulating the desire to perform and creating pride in work well done. I mentioned some of the possibilities in the way of arousing this interest on the part of boys, and of girls, too. I suggested that somewhere might be found the means to place in the hands of the young a booklet prepared in popular language setting forth the romance of building.

I said this could begin with a story about the boards in the floor upon which they worked. How these were made of wood from the trees in the forests, logged and milled, and assembled by the clever hands of willing workers into the objects with which they were familiar. The story of the various trees and woods, their habits and growths, the processes of converting them into lumber, the carpentry and joinery required, would be fascinating when accompanied by the lesson of conservation and reforestation.

Similar alluring and equally cultural stories and lessons could be prepared about the plastering on the walls and ceilings, the slate in the blackboards, the chalk they used, the tiling on the walls and floors, and about the stone, the common brick, the face brick, the cement, marble, and other materials of the building in which they studied; of the home in which they lived—all, all of vital interest and value from the human and educational standpoint. Think of the possibilities of tying up with history and geography through the making of brick since the time of Pharaoh. The making of tiles, down through the ages, by the Assyrians, the Persians, and others. The use of marbles in the temples of the Greeks. From these materials to their present-day geologic formation, their processes of extraction, of manufacture, of fabrication, would be but a step in vocational guidance, and a very logical one in arousing final interest in the possible life work of anyone. Then would come the vocational training in which you are all so much interested. And this part of the education of the youth would not be wasted on the girls. Some of the many boys would be guided into the building crafts, but all of the girls would be better wives of workers or of any other men through this surer knowledge of the requi-

sites of housekeeping in its truest sense. Also they would be more intelligent future clients of architects and would not marvel at the shrinkage of wood, the cracking of plaster when caused by it, the peeling of paint if too freshly applied, and some of the many inevitable pranks that time and lack of common knowledge play with all materials. Also they would the more appreciate the value of good workmanship.

## HOW TO CONVERT THE RENTER INTO A HOME OWNER

For the past 100 years practically half the families of the United States have been renters, half have been owners. It seems that when an owner dies a renter has accumulated by that time enough to take the place of the deceased as a home owner, so that the relative percentage has remained the same through all these years.

Through the writer's research work a solution of this problem has been found. This solution means a practical applying of education and inspiration towards home ownership, which is being worked out in Flint.

We find that half of the working men in America, between the ages of 20 to 60, earn \$80,000 and at the end of that 40-year period they have nothing left but the clothes on their backs. No one had ever come to their home and devoted an evening to explaining about a budget, thrift and the hundred and one phases, both financial and sentimental, concerning home-owning. That is where we come in with our educational and inspirational campaign.

We have actually found that for half the families in America to eventually own their homes it was not a question of higher wages, but a question of applying a small part of their present wages first on a home site or lot, and then when that is paid for, on a home itself. We are teaching these families that instead of looking for an easy road or a short cut to home-ownership, or by trying to make a quick fortune by investing their loose change in various stock propositions that they will actually have more in the end by following our plan.

To put our plan into practical operation our representative goes into the home with charts, maps, data and complete information. First he explains to them that the average family earns \$80,000 during a life time and spends \$20,000 of this for rents, which is an absolute waste. We show him that even though the buying of

his homesite and the building of his own home might take a number of years, that if he does not make the start with a few dollars now he will at the end of 10, 20, 30 years be right where he is today. This being proven by the actual experience of the average human being and that it is better, even though it takes him until he is 50 years of age to pay for that home, for then his misery will be less and his happiness will be greater.

We offer the following six suggestions for 1924.

1. **WORK, EARN, LEARN.** Under this head we explain in detail how this employee really has Capital in His Wages and in his Time, and then we analyze what actually becomes of his Wages and Time and what he does with them. We have a big factor to work on when we are talking about his Capital of \$80,000 being his life's earnings. This then leads us into number two.

2. **MAKE A BUDGET.** Under this we analyze the cost of living with its essentials of food, clothing and shelter, together with its other expenses of operating, health, advancement, savings and investments, and luxuries. We take his own individual case and experience and analyze them on a chart so that we can get the figures to him before his very eyes. And along with this we explain to him the earning power of the average man, how only a very small percentage earn over the \$5,000 mark and yet how easy it is for him to have what he wants if he will only plan his income and expenditures as intelligently as a big corporation.

3. **OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT.** If he has no bank account we offer to introduce him to a bank and get him started even though it is only a dollar deposited, believing that his ambitions will be aroused and that he will think more of himself with a bank account.

4. **BUY A HOME OR A HOMESITE.** Because of the fact that the average renter has no money on hand with which to make a down payment on a home we advocate to him the buying of a homesite and he can make his down payment on this homesite in payments of \$10 each pay day. The advantage of buying a homesite instead of trying to leave his money in a savings bank is that he cannot draw it out, it gives him a systematic savings plan and he is purchasing today from the General Motors Co. for one-half what he would have to pay in five years from now. We urge him to buy a homesite especially for two reasons.

## 1. FOR A HOME.

Because of its Mental & Moral Effects.

- “ of its Best Aid to Human Success.
- “ it Increases Efficiency and Earning Power.
- “ it is a Woman's Goal.
- “ of the Welfare of the Children.
- “ it adds all the Finer Things to Life.
- “ it Reduces the Cost of Living (by Saving).
- “ it is the Safest and Most Profitable Family Investment.
- “ it is the Best Form of Family Protection.

## 2. FOR AN INVESTMENT.

Because it is the Safest and Most Profitable and Most Beneficial Investment on Earth.

5. CARRY LIFE INSURANCE. We believe the average workman will be more ambitious if he has even a small amount of life insurance, and then we urge him when he builds his home to take out enough life insurance to cover the amount he owes on his home so that his family will have a clear and free title to the home in case of his death.

6. MAKE A WILL. Another incentive to arouse the ambition of the workman, for it creates the desire to accumulate something to leave in a will.

Our final argument is the history of human beings like himself.

1. HISTORY OF YOUR CITY. We tell them of the history of the city in which they are living, of its land and various other developments during the last 100 years.

2. HISTORY OF PANICS AND DEPRESSIONS. We tell them of the history of the panics and depressions during the past 100 years, their causes and effects and that their rent continues on through all these periods.

3. HISTORY OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE. We explain thoroughly and in detail the information chart of human experience, starting with 100 men at the age of 25 and showing what happens to these men at the end of each 10-year period.



4. **CHEAPER TO OWN THAN TO RENT.** We absolutely then prove beyond any question of doubt, that over a period of years it is cheaper to own than to rent. Our representative takes the house in which this man and wife is living, tells them its present value, how long it would take to buy that home on a monthly payment basis and exactly how much interest, taxes and insurance and upkeep he would pay by the time the home was paid for.

5. **TAXES AND WHAT YOU GET FOR YOUR MONEY.** The average renter knows nothing about taxes and he does not realize until he hears our detailed report of the many benefits he receives from taxes, that he is really getting more than his money's worth. We show him how as a home owner he is a king in his own palace, and he has at his command hundreds of city employees to do his bidding,—city officials as his servants with additional servants looking after his health through the health department, street cleaners to keep the front of his palace looking spic-and-span, a police department to guard his treasures, street lights, a fire department and other servants to obey his every wish, and with a school system with free text books giving him an education for his children at 1/100 what it would cost him to do for himself.

6. **HUMAN INTEREST STORIES.** Did his parents, his Uncles and Aunts and Grandparents all own their own homes? What was the actual experience of those relatives? In solving their own salvation? And what did they possess by the time their existence ended on this earth? We have never failed to dig up among his family skeletons sufficient arguments to convince him.

7. **HOW TO GET STARTED.** We sell him so strongly on the home-owning idea that we make him want it more than he ever wanted an automobile. We sell him for life,—permanent believers in home ownership. We have already analyzed his luxuries and necessities, we convince him to record his disbursements and we plug his many leaks, finally convincing him that the regularity of depositing in a homesite is the beginning of a home of his own and the secret of his life's success.

We find that it is not a question of educating the workman on the desirability of owning a pretty home of his own, but our work is to educate him in how to work out his plan to eventually get that home.

We then actually start him on his way toward home-ownership by making him the proud possessor of a homesite—purchased on

contract. And even though he does not purchase his homesite now we have given him a new slant on life and inspired him with the idea that he can get ahead.

LOUIS W. WALTER  
Flint, Michigan

## TOWN PLANNING IN ENGLAND

American students of the English Town Planning Act will be very greatly helped in their understanding of the operation of that important statute by a little pamphlet which has recently been issued by the British Ministry of Health entitled "Town Planning in England and Wales." In this 24-page document which can be obtained from H. M. Stationery Office, price 4d., the Ministry of Health outlines the scope and object of Town Planning schemes and the method of procedure to be followed in preparing them.

As stated in the introduction :

The preparation of a Town Planning Scheme does not imply, as is sometimes supposed, an intention to cover the whole of the land in question with buildings or to make a somewhat elaborate housing scheme, nor does it necessarily involve the Local Authority in immediate expenditure on works of any kind.

Its object is to provide that development, if and when it takes place, shall be in accordance with a plan which has been prepared in the interests of the community as a whole—industrial and commercial as well as residential—land owners as well as tenants—and thus help to secure for the future, so far as reasonable foresight can do so, the welfare and prosperity of the district and its inhabitants.

The plan should fix in broad outline, the areas to be used for industry, business and residence, the principal roads and open spaces, the number of buildings to the acre, and similar matters.

The object aimed at can be achieved only if the plan adopted meets with the general support of all classes of the community, and it is, therefore, of the utmost importance that a Local Authority should, from, and even before the inception of its plan, consult every interest likely to be affected. It is worthy of note that in America it is in most cases the business interests which have taken the initiative in the matter, and it should be realized that the need and advantages of town planning may be even greater for industry and commerce than for dwelling-houses and residential amenities.

The pamphlet discusses the procedure to be followed under the following main heads :

Local Authorities Responsible for Preparation of Schemes, Initial Work, Area to be Planned, Planning of Land in District of Another Authority, Effect of Resolution to Prepare a Scheme; Interim Development, Preparation of Preliminary Statement, Scope of Preliminary Statement, Approval of Preliminary Statement, Effect of Approval of Preliminary Statement, Draft Scheme, Final Scheme and Its Approval by Minister, Opportunities for Representation and Objection, Expense of Preparing Scheme, Compensation and Betterment, Regional Planning, Extension of Time, Enforcement of Scheme, Future Development.

Every student of Town Planning in practice in any country will find it highly desirable to obtain a copy of this important and very clearly expressed document.

## TOWN PLANNING IN GREAT BRITAIN

A recent bulletin of the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation (Bulletin No. 3, March, 1924) is devoted in large part to an outline of Town Planning Procedure in Great Britain prepared by H. Chapman, the Secretary of the Federation from information supplied by G. L. Pepler, Past-President of the Town Planning Institute and an important official in the British Ministry of Health with responsibility for the Town Planning Work of that Department of the Ministry.

This outline of Procedure, Powers and Duties discusses the question under the following main heads:

Legislation Adopted, Compulsory Town Planning, Authorities and Officials responsible for preparing and carrying out the plan, Areas that may be planned, Planning an area of an adjoining local authority, Procedure in preparing the plan, Joint Town Planning Schemes and Regional Planning, What the Town Plan Includes, Controlling Sequence for building on plots, Responsibility for Estate Planning, Acquisition of Property by an authority in excess of immediate actual needs, Compensation for Damage due to a town planning scheme, Taxation for Betterment due to a town planning scheme, Appeals and Disputes, General Progress and Tendencies of Town Planning.

Students of Town Planning in America who wish to obtain quickly a comprehensive idea of the manner in which the Town Planning laws of Great Britain function will find this an admirable aid to an understanding of the subject.

## PLATTING REGULATIONS

At a recent meeting of the American Institute of City Planning held in New York the subject of Platting Regulations and how to control buildings in the bed of mapped streets were thoroughly discussed.

Both of these interesting topics were ably presented by Edward M. Bassett of New York as well as by Robert Whitten of Cleveland and by others.

In discussing the question of Platting Regulations Mr. Bassett enunciated the following tentative Conclusions:

1. A state enactment requiring approval by a municipal authority for a plat before it can be filed in a recording office is enforceable by the courts.
2. A state enactment requiring the preparation of a plat, its approval by municipal authority and its filing in a recording office—not, however, involving dedication of streets—before a land owner can place buildings on a development, is probably enforceable by the courts. *Town of Windsor v. Whitney*, 95 Conn. Rep. 357.
3. The filing of a plat showing streets which are a part of an official city map, or filing such a plat after approval by municipal authority is tantamount to an offer of dedication of the streets or parks shown thereon.
4. A state enactment requiring developers to prepare a plat, secure approval by municipal authority and file the same, showing streets or parks and compelling an offer of dedication of the same, is not enforceable by the courts.

## TELEPHONE COMPANIES AND ZONING

An important conference was held a few months ago in Philadelphia at the invitation of the Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania between officials of that company and leading Zoning consultants and city planners, in Pennsylvania as well as elsewhere to consider the question of the relation of telephone exchanges to residential districts as established by Zoning ordinances throughout the country.

Inasmuch as the telephone corporations have probably done more real city planning and Zoning in anticipation of the public need than has any other agency in the country, this conference became of special importance. The conference was attended by



such well known experts and students of Zoning as J. Herman Knisely, Director of the Bureau of Municipalities of the State of Pennsylvania; B. Antrim Haldeman, City Planning Engineer of that Bureau; Morris Knowles, Chairman of the City Planning Commission of Pittsburgh; Bernard J. Newman, Managing Director of the Philadelphia Housing Association and Edward M. Bassett of New York.

At this initial meeting a committee of five was appointed to make a thorough study of the problem as presented by the telephone company and the effect of the requirements in Zoning Ordinances upon the telephone business.

A report was rendered under date of February 20th and has subsequently been published as a pamphlet of 100 pages with an appendix of maps, diagrams and tables and graphs of statistics under the title "Conference on Zoning as Affecting Telephone Companies." Copies can be obtained from the Bell Telephone Company at 261 North Broad Street, Philadelphia.

In its Report the Committee states that "it is convinced after listening to and considering the able presentation of the problem involved in locating central offices close to wire centers, that a real necessity may exist for such structures in 'Residence Districts,' where engineering studies and operative conditions show this to be required."

Edward M. Bassett, who acted as counsel to the Committee, advised them that a permission to locate such exchanges in a "Residence District" was lawful. The Committee recommends that in growing populous communities such use should be included among those listed as permitted in "Residence Districts."

It adds that it realizes at the same time that while this may permit acquirement of property with an assurance that it can be used for such purposes, it will frequently be true that variation in height and area restriction will be necessary in order to most effectively and economically provide for the development of telephone facilities.

It is on this much mooted question of height that difficulties are likely to arise.

All students of Zoning problems in practice will find it advisable to obtain a copy of this most interesting and valuable Report.

## ARGUMENTS FOR ZONING

In connection with the consideration of the Cincinnati Zoning Ordinance recently enacted, the United City Planning Committee of Cincinnati has performed a nation-wide service in preparing a document entitled "Statement and Evidence Submitted on Pending Zoning Ordinance" which is in effect a series of arguments for the cause of Zoning, setting forth the advantages of Zoning from the points of view of its Relations to Health, Recreation, Housing, Social Welfare, Real Estate Values and Engineering Problems.

How important this 60-page document is to all Zoning consultants and students of Zoning is at once evident upon consideration of the manner in which the relation of Zoning to health, for example, is treated.

In discussing the question of the "Relation of Zoning to Health" there are presented resolutions from the Anti-Tuberculosis League; a statement by the Health Commissioner of Cincinnati as to the effect of bad housing and the necessity of fresh air and sunshine and similar phases of health problems; a statement from a local physician as to the relation of unregulated city growth of nervous disorder, stressing the injury caused by noisy overcrowded and congested streets, hustle and hurry, smoke-laden atmosphere and dust and dirt. Another statement from a local physician as to the relation of Zoning to the prevalence of respiratory infection and other diseases; a statement from the Babies' Milk Fund Association; from the Committee on Public Health of the Academy of Medicine in which congestion, sunlight and health, tuberculosis, automobile traffic, noises, vibration, monotony, air conditioning in relation to public health are all discussed.

This is followed by a report of the Public Health Federation as to the importance of protecting residential districts.

In similar fashion the "Relation of Zoning to Recreation" is presented by the President of the Board of Park Commissioners and by other citizens. A statement of the "Relation of Zoning to Housing" is presented on behalf of the Better Housing League, which naturally stresses the importance of light and ventilation and of residence districts.

Similarly with regard to social welfare, opinion evidence is

presented from the Director of the Bureau of Catholic Charities and Social Service, the Ohio Humane Society, the Council of Social Agencies, the United Jewish Social Agencies, the Judge of the Court of Domestic Relations, the Secretary of the Associated Charities, the head of the Department of Social Science of the University, and other persons competent to speak. In addition, the views of a woman realtor are presented from the point of view of real estate.

With relation to engineering problems, a statement is presented from the President of the Ohio Mechanics' Institute and testimony is adduced from the experiences of other cities, notably Milwaukee and St. Louis, showing the effect of Zoning on city engineering projects.

Finally, the pamphlet concludes with an important digest of Zoning in relation to limiting height of buildings, with a list of cities that have limited heights and the limits that have been fixed and the various arguments for and against this control of high buildings, prepared by Bleecker Marquette, Secretary of the Better Housing League. The document ends with a statement of the leading decisions on the constitutionality of Zoning prepared by Alfred Bettman, Attorney-at-Law and Chairman of the United City Planning Committee responsible for the Zoning Ordinance.

It is thus seen that this document is an important contribution to the literature of Zoning and a piece of ammunition valuable to have for every person interested in Zoning. Copies of the document can be obtained from the United City Planning Committee of Cincinnati.

After reading this presentation of the cause of Zoning, it is not surprising to learn that, notwithstanding the active opposition of the local Real Estate Board to the proposed Zoning Ordinance, the Cincinnati Zoning Ordinance has been unanimously adopted by the local legislative body.

## RECENT BOOKS AND REPORTS ON HOUSING, ZONING AND TOWN PLANNING \*

### BOOKS

#### ENGLAND

- (The) Deeside Regional Planning Scheme (Chester & Flintshire), Report by Patrick Abercrombie, Sydney Kelly and Theodore Fyfe. 67p. illus. plans maps and diag. London, University Press of Liverpool, Ltd., 1923.
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# Housing Betterment

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# Housing Betterment

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## THE HOUSING MUDDLE IN ENGLAND

Labor's Housing Programme has died a-borning. The new Labor Government took office last February. It submitted its Housing proposals to Parliament in May, secured its legislation in August and was turned out of office in October.

The situation is one to make the judicious grieve—whether one is an advocate of government-housing or an opponent of it. In either case, the English experience affords a striking object lesson of the dangers inherent in government-housing in practice.

For, when Housing is made a political issue it must necessarily become subject to the constantly fluctuating influence of changed political situations.

That in the long run a great social reform will be better advanced under such circumstances, than it will be, withdrawn from the conflicting currents of political action is hard to believe.

In any event the present situation is a striking illustration of the dangers of making Housing a political issue.

Once more the weary round begins. Again, a new Government will take control. Again, a new Minister of Health will be appointed. Again, a new Housing Policy will have to be formulated. Again, an old Housing Policy will have to be scrapped. Again, new Housing legislation will be prepared. Again, that legislation will have to be gotten through Parliament.

It is a certainty that when the Conservatives assume the reins of power a few weeks from now, there is little likelihood of their carrying out the Housing Policy of the Labor Government; for, the Conservatives made their position quite plain with regard to that policy when the Housing Act of 1924 was pending in Parliament.

## THE CONSERVATIVES' POSITION

On its second reading Lord Eustace Percy, speaking officially on behalf of the Unionist party, moved an amendment stating that

This House cannot assent to the second reading of a Bill which meets none of the difficulties either as regards labor or materials that at present limit the building of houses, discourages private enterprise and private ownership, tends to increase costs, and throws an excessive burden upon the State and the local authorities, without any likelihood that an adequate supply of houses will thereby be made available.

It can hardly be doubted, in the light of that clear-cut pronouncement, that the Conservative party will formulate its own Housing Policy which will be diametrically opposed to the recent programme of Labor.

As the Conservatives were in power less than a year ago and had enunciated their own Housing Programme and were carrying it out, it is not difficult to prophesy what the policy of the new Government is likely to be, viz., a return to private enterprise as rapidly as possible and as consistently as possible with the least disturbance to the building industry, and with a minimum subsidy on the part of the State.

This situation has so important a bearing on the whole question of Government Housing and State aid to Housing—questions that are bound to be discussed in the United States—that it seems not inappropriate to review here some of the chief items in Labor's Housing Programme and some of the defects in that programme as pointed out by various persons in England.

The main features of that programme have already been stated in this journal.\*

### LABOR'S PROGRAMME

The essential elements of that programme may be briefly stated as follows:

Continuity of employment to the building industry for a period of 15 years, aiming at a total production, at a gradually increasing

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\* *"Housing Betterment"; February, May, 1924.*



rate, of approximately 2,500,000 houses in Great Britain; the securing of the labor essential to the carrying out of this scheme through revising the apprenticeship system, which provides a large increase in the number of apprentices, the acceptance of adult apprentices and the shortening of the apprenticeship period; the placing upon the Building Industry itself of the responsibility for producing the requisite number of houses, and the with-holding of the Government subsidy upon the failure of the Industry to produce an adequate number; the keeping down of the cost of building by an agreement within the industry to hold prices of building materials at the prices prevailing on January 1, 1924: the providing of a subsidy from the central Government in the amount of £9 a year per house for 40 years on the annual rental, where a house is built by the local authorities; and in the case of houses situated in an agricultural parish (to be defined by the Government) an annual subsidy at the rate of £12-10s a year for 40 years; a control of the rent to be charged to practically 9s a week; (the rate of pre-war working class houses): the local authorities are to be responsible for a subsidy of £4-10s a year per house for 40 years, in addition to the subsidy from the Federal Government: the houses to be let and not sold.

The kinds of houses that will be eligible for the subsidy are limited to a minimum of 620 superficial feet and a maximum of 950, in the case of a two-story cottage, and a minimum of 550 and a maximum of 880 superficial feet in the case of a one-story cottage, or bungalow or for a flat: the houses to be built shall take into account the requirements of any Town Planning scheme likely to be made in that district; and the rate of density of the houses will not, except by special consent of the Minister, exceed 8 per acre in an agricultural parish and 12 per acre elsewhere.

While there are other details connected with the scheme, that, in its essence, is a statement of the fundamental features of Labor's Programme. The cost of this scheme directly to the taxpayer for providing the subsidy alone is estimated at £1,400,000,000 (\$7,000,000,000), this sum to be provided out of general and local taxation.

Leaving out of consideration the vitally important question of whether such a scheme is likely to break the backs of the taxpayers of Great Britain or not, and whether at a time when the country is suffering from a serious situation of unemployment and industrial stagnation, it can stand a burden of this kind—it should be remembered that at the present time England is paying an unemployment dole to over a million persons each week—there are various other considerations which remain, which are well worth careful scrutiny by the student of housing.

## THE FATAL DEFECT

The fundamental defect of this whole programme, it seems to us, is that it fails to insure that the houses that will be built will be satisfactory and a credit to the people of England.

In this respect Labor's Programme coincides with the programme of the Conservative Party, as developed under Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and Minister of Health Neville Chamberlain in 1923. In both programmes the Government has surrendered entire control over the types of houses to be built leaving the local authorities and the private builder free to build as they please, provided they keep within the limits of size and adhere to other conditions laid down.

Under the Addison scheme—no matter what its faults were—houses *were* produced that were attractive to look upon and to live in: houses, that were laid out with regard to the amenities of civilization, and with reference to encouraging intelligent site planning; houses that were simple; that had good proportions, and line; that were harmonious and pleasing; and on the whole marked a great advance in the domestic architecture of any nation.

With, however, the desire to placate politically the sentiment of the local authorities for "home rule", or local control of such matters, the Government both in this administration and in the previous one has completely surrendered control of these vital factors in the situation.

That either a Labor Government or a Conservative Government should have taken so short-sighted a view is surprising. For, one of the chief factors in the demand for better housing conditions in England, as well as for meeting the housing shortage, has been the universal cry that the time has come for England to do away with its slums, and to see to it that its workers are housed under conditions that are fit for human beings.

## SUBSIDIZING SLUMS

Those who are familiar with England's so-called "slums" know that they are largely such because of their drab monotony. So far as the types of houses are concerned as to their *plan* and *design*, they are, as a rule, admirable places of habitation for people of small income. The rooms are uniformly well lighted and well ventilated. Most of these houses are low in height, many

of them but one story high, seldom more than two stories. The houses are generally, but two rooms in depth, with one room on the street and the other on a large back yard.

When it comes to conveniences of living and maintenance of proper repairs, the houses are on the whole fairly adequate. But when their *appearance* is concerned—when one remembers the unending miles of drab uninteresting streets—one realizes that the epithet applied to these houses by Tom Burns, of “Brick boxes with a slate lid”, was not inappropriate.

It is surprising that in the face of the universal knowledge, throughout all of England, of the dreariness of these unending rows of commercially built houses, that it should now be proposed both by Conservative and Labor Governments to repeat these architectural monstrosities to the number of 2,500,000 houses, all over again.

Under a scheme of uncontrolled and unrestricted private enterprise these have been an unfortunate necessity. But that these uninteresting and unattractive homes should be repeated by the millions, under a plan where the taxpayers of England are called upon to provide out of their earnings a very substantial amount of the cost of these houses appears incredible.

As the Government has clearly seen that under such circumstances it has the right to dictate certain fundamentals, such as the number of rooms, the size of the houses and the density per acre, it is a source of surprise that it should not have equally realized that, if it wished to obtain results that would be a credit to its administration, it needed to keep a much closer control of the architecture of the houses as well as of their size.

### DESPOILING LOVELY ENGLAND

No person who has travelled in England within the last two years and has had occasion to see the horrible eyesores and architectural monstrosities that have been built in that time under private enterprise, and many of them with Government subsidy, can fail to appreciate the extent to which England's loveliness is being despoiled.

Speaking of this situation, the *Architects' Journal* of London said not long ago:

A few months ago an architect and his client set out from London on a journey to a beautiful district of southern Eng-

land in search of a site for a house. They returned in a deflated condition a good deal sooner than was expected, and reported that that beautiful country was beautiful no more. Private enterprise was in the field, and the face of that fair land had broken out in private enterprise as though it had taken nettle-rash.

We are all familiar with the spectacle. Hayling Island and its vicinities, the New Forest and much of South Devon has taken the disorder. Brockenhurst is becoming like a mean suburb of a manufacturing town. Christchurch, which thirty years ago was a place for a poet to dream in, is quite spoilt. The traveller now reaches its parlor through the dust heap. The twenty miles from Christchurch to Poole raise the image of the Prince of Ugliness, smearing a callous thumb along tram lines; Lyndhurst long ago succumbed to the enterprise of the garage proprietor, and has ceased to be known as beautiful, except by those who have never been there. Near Ringwood, the natural scenes of untamed wilderness, rolling moorland and forest which cannot be matched anywhere in England, are being defiled.

In fact, all this country exhibits the devil fighting the Almighty on his very doorstep; for if the contemplation of natural scenes, of creatures, of plants sets free our comprehension of Heaven this other unnatural scene of degradation stands for the opposite."

\* \* \* \* \*

"The case is more deplorable because altruistic enterprise—a reaction against private enterprise—has shown under the leadership of Mr. Raymond Unwin and others how the true and beautiful thing can be economically done. Examples are now in evidence all over the country. At Burley, near Ringwood, a dozen cottages have been grouped which in the future will be one of the best admired attractions of a beautiful village.

Private enterprise, however, is not content to exercise itself in a competition in which all the advantages it sets store by are on its own side, but hangs about the altruist encampment like a hoard of pariah dogs, to snatch what it can and stultify the work of honest house building.

No sooner has the public learnt to value the conception of



a Garden Village than private enterprise hurriedly jostles its gridiron, land-development lay-out into crookedness, imitates in shoddy makeshift what it deems to be the attractive features in this new architecture of cottages, and advertises the result as a 'Garden Village' and itself as a syndicate of altruists.

### THE ARCHITECTS PROTEST

That the architects of England realize this situation was evidenced by the action taken by the Royal Institute of British Architects in appointing a Committee to wait upon the Minister of Health last May, at the time when the new housing law was first being proposed. They made two main recommendations to the Government; the chief of these was to the effect that the Government should make it a condition that in any grant of public funds for housing schemes, such schemes shall be prepared by qualified architects.

The Minister of Health received this delegation very politely, but there it ended. The recommendation was not accepted and not included in the new Housing Law. Unfortunately, Labor seems to have been concerned only with the providing of the greatest number of houses at the lowest cost and in the quickest possible time, and *chiefly as a means of providing continuing employment to the building trades through a long period of time*, under conditions agreeable to the building trade and at the same time to meet the popular demand for a sufficient supply of houses.

It is not strange that men who have, by their own admission, spent their childhood in slums and never had before them proper standards of what constitutes beautiful homes, should fail to be very keen for considerations of this kind, but should be entirely satisfied with such houses as the commercial builder has supplied to the workingmen of England for many years past.

Perhaps the Conservatives when they return to power may realize the great error of their past policy and adopt a policy for the future which will safeguard this important consideration.

Were it not for the fetish of Home Rule and of doing away with the constant criticism from the local authorities that "Whitehall" stands in the way of greater progress and of lower costs, there can be no question but that this important consideration would be adopted.

## AN APPEAL TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT

When the Conservatives come back to power in a few weeks it is to be hoped that they will not consider that the situation today is what it was a year ago and that it can be met by slightly revising their housing policy under the previous Chamberlain régime.

Wise leadership will suggest to them that they take a leaf out of Labor's book and embody in their new policy those features of Labor's programme that are meritorious.

It is especially to be hoped that they will give heed to the importance of maintaining proper standards in the houses that are to be built, and thus make the appearance of future England a thing to be rejoiced at, rather than something to be ashamed of.

Their decision on this point will mean that all England will either be nothing but dreary rows of monotonous "brick boxes with a slate lid", or will be something that will cause persons from all over the world to visit her for the sake of studying the splendid way in which England has solved the problem of the housing of its people.

The example has been set under the Addison scheme of what is possible in the direction of artistic and charming houses through Government control. The essential feature of that scheme, and which produced these houses was the fact that architectural considerations were insisted upon, that the Government took control of the standard of house to be built, and did not, out of a mistaken sense of placating local sentiment, surrender such control.

We commend to the new Government the remarks on this aspect of the subject contained in an editorial in the *Architect's Journal* of some months ago. They said:

It is a pity that the average Conservative should fall down and worship Baal—in the form of the ugly and overcrowded house—because as representing the better-educated section of the community he at least should know the difference between good and bad work, and as it is he is the most ignorant of all.

And in another issue of that journal, we find the following:

We are intensely aware of the mean aspect of our industrial towns, of the squalid appearance of our modern streets, especially of those inhabited by the industrial worker, but it has occurred to few of us that there is any remedy for this state of things. We genuinely believe (for the most part) that we can get beautiful

towns, without beautiful houses—that we can make omelettes without breaking eggs!

To state that a beautiful town is made up of beautiful streets, and that a beautiful street is nothing but a collection of beautiful buildings, sounds like the most obvious of platitudes—but it is a platitude I should like to see nailed up in every local authority's office, on the desk of every politician, and in the text books of all housing reformers.

\* \* \* \* \*

To take one outstanding example, which it might be thought would appeal to even the most obtuse of our hardheaded business men—that of Hampstead Garden Suburb. Here, from the very commencement of its development, a control and censorship over design were rigidly enforced, and the amenities of the district were most carefully considered, or in other words, the claim of beauty was allowed. And what is the result today? To put it on the lowest plane of pounds, shillings, and pence, the result is that practically any house within the Suburb will, in the open market, fetch anything from 10 to 20% above a house of similar accommodation outside. This is a statement, not of opinion, but of fact, which can be easily verified by the advertisement columns of a newspaper or the registers of estate agents. Surely a matter for practical men to ponder over! Mr. Wheatley has put it on record that whatever happens he does not mean to build slums! But what is a slum except a collection of mean buildings, making mean streets, built by mean persons, and in the end inevitably degrading the people who live in them?

And again this same journal says on another occasion:

Meanwhile no attempt is being made to ensure that the houses which the nation is to buy will be worth buying. Such apathy is without parallel. If we buy battleships or guns, the department responsible takes a little interest, not only in the amount of money to be spent but also in the quality of the purchase.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Addison scheme was costly, but for the most part the nation got good value: good value, that is, when taking into consideration the prices then ruling. The nation got good value because the Government kept strict control over the kind of houses towards the cost of which it intended to contribute. The Government was determined, as far as possible, to subsidize neither ugliness nor slums.

## NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S OPPORTUNITY

Neville Chamberlain, whose appointment has just been announced as the new Minister of Health, is reported to have pre-

ferred to return to this office, rather than accept the portfolio of Chancellor of the Exchequer, because of his desire to solve England's Housing Problem.

We hope that this is the case. No greater opportunity could confront any man. By his wisdom—or otherwise—the future welfare of hundreds of thousands of future Englishmen will be vitally affected.

That Mr. Chamberlain will rise to the occasion, we firmly believe. We have great faith in him. When he was appointed Minister of Health 18 months ago, we said at that time "No better appointment probably could have been made in all England."

We envy Mr. Chamberlain his opportunity.

### CAN COSTS BE KEPT DOWN?

The rock on which the housing policies of previous Administrations foundered, was the rising cost of building materials and building labor.

One of the chief merits of the late Labor Government's Programme was its consultation with the building industry before elaborating a policy, to the end that the Industry might feel responsibility for the **production of the houses needed** by England. It sought to reach agreements by which increasing costs would be controlled, and by which it would be possible, through stabilizing the cost of labor and materials, to produce houses which with a subsidy from Government, would be within the rental power of the lower-paid members of the community.

That the Labor Government probably could not have carried out its programme, is most likely. For, it was unable to prevent a long drawn out and bitter strike and lock-out in the building trades, beginning last July and running for seven weeks and in which Labor ran away from the agreements it had previously reached and brushed these aside as matters of no consequence.

And this was at the very time that a Government controlled by Labor was presenting to Parliament a proposal which involved, as one of its fundamental features, an agreement in the building trades between employer and employee, and a guarantee on the part of the Government that it would bring about an undertaking by organized labor and by the industry itself by which 2,500,000 houses would be produced at prices agreed upon.



## CAN LABOR CONTROL LABOR?

Just how the Government expected to hold its supporters in the building industry to an agreement on wages and conditions of labor in constructing the houses under the Government's scheme has never been outlined, and Minister of Health Wheatley never went further than to say that the plan depended upon mutual confidence between employer and operatives, and that without such confidence the scheme could not be worked.

While it is true that the programme outlined by the Minister of Health when his new scheme was first submitted to Parliament last June, contemplated a scheme for the control both of the cost of materials and of labor, it is significant that when the scheme finally emerged in the form of an accomplished statute passed by Parliament in August, this feature somehow or other had become eliminated.

Probably no better summing up of the failure of the Government in this respect can be given than that stated in the journal *The Builder*, of London, which says:

There are objections to this bill which are in no way political, and the main objection is that it indicates an end to be attained, but fails in any way to supply the means. The old Jingo war cry of some 40 years ago 'We've got the men, we've got the ships. We've got the money, too', paraphrased and applied to this Bill would run 'We've got *no* men. We've got *no* bricks, but we'll vote the money through'.

That no binding agreement with the building trades had been assured the Labor Government, was evidenced by the debate on the measure in Parliament the latter part of July. The Minister of Health was asked at that time

"whether the treaty he had made with the building trade as to the augmentation of labor was embodied in any other documents beyond the Housing (Financial Provisions) Bill; if not, whether the building trade and the several trade unions concerned had explicitly accepted the Bill as constituting a guarantee in return for which they were prepared to undertake that there should be one apprentice to three craftsmen in the various branches of the trade; if so, what period was covered by this undertaking; and would he submit to the House copies of any documents signed on behalf of the building trade or the trade unions in this matter."

To this inquiry the Minister replied, by referring to the Report of the National House Building Committee which had already been submitted to the House, and said that there were no further documents signed on behalf of the building industry dealing with the matter.

He was again asked "What guarantee there was, if the House passed the Housing Bill that the agreement embodied in the measure might not be repudiated by one or more of the trade unions, and that they might not refuse to provide the extra labor and apprentices which was part of the bargain.

To this the Minister replied

"The only guarantee that exists is that which one honorable body of men gives to another."

In the face of the recent "outlaw" strike in the building industry this seems rather a fragile foundation on which to base a great Housing Programme.

## KILLING PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

One of the criticisms of Labor's new Housing Act is that, through its discrimination against private enterprise in the amount of the subsidy, it practically destroys that means of providing houses; although the Government has intended in good faith to continue private enterprise as a means of providing houses of a certain type.

That the Government so intended there can be no doubt; for, it continued the main provisions of the 1923 Act under the Chamberlain régime. But with a singular inability to think an economic question through to its ultimate conclusion, those responsible for the new policy have failed to realize that by providing under the new Act a subsidy of £9 a year on the rent of the houses built by local authorities, (in addition to a subsidy of £4-10s a year from these local authorities, or a total subsidy of £13-10s), there is little likelihood that private builders of houses for sale—who will receive only a subsidy of £6 per annum under the 1923 Chamberlain Act—will be able to compete with the builders of houses to be let under the new conditions.

Private enterprise and house owning will therefore be put an end to, insofar as working class dwellings are concerned.

The Labor Government holds the view that private enterprise has long ceased to function, so far as working class dwellings are concerned, and that no working man wants to own his home, but that all wish the greater freedom of renting houses, with all that that entails.

Such a point of view loses sight of the fact that prior to the Lloyd George Land Tax schemes—by which private enterprise was frightened away from this form of investment—the chief means of providing houses for the working classes, as well as the middle classes, was through the building of such houses by private enterprise; and that at that time this was one of the chief channels for the investment of the funds of persons of small means.

One of the chief factors responsible for the present housing shortage in England has been the drying up of those channels, by the fear that investment in such property would no longer be profitable.

What the Lloyd George Land Tax schemes thus started in creating an atmosphere of distrust, the Rent Restriction Acts, passed during the war—and still on the statute books—gave the finishing blow to.

That, however, private enterprise cannot be brought back into the field is incredible, and something that no country ought to be willing to admit.

It is not strange that a socialistic government, such as the Labor Government was, should hold such a view, should believe that the providing of houses for people to live in, is a function of the State.

That this is an unfortunate view of the future of a great country is at once apparent to us in the United States. For, here, there is universal acceptance of the belief that it is for the best interest of the country and of all concerned that, not only the so-called middle class and well-to-do citizen should own his home, but that the working-man—of all men—should be encouraged to home ownership; that through home ownership the property owner has a stake in the country, in the Government of which he has a voice, and a feeling of participation in citizenship that can be achieved in no other way.

Those who are advocates of government housing should reflect with very great concern upon this one effect of the Labor Government's plan.

## PRIVATE ENTERPRISE NOT DEAD YET

That Private Enterprise is not dead, even though it may not be building so-called workingmen's dwellings at the present time—it would be a strange thing if it did under the present Rent Restriction Law's operation—is evidenced by recent official figures given by the Minister of Health in response to a Parliamentary question.

It appears that up to June 11th of this year the Minister of Health had given authority for the erection of 49,937 houses by the local authorities, as compared with 92,380 by private enterprise—or nearly twice as many by private enterprise as by the local authorities. Again, up to June 1st, last, the Minister of Health had approved contracts under schemes of local authorities to the number of 30,597; and for houses to be built by private enterprise 57,225, or again nearly twice as many. In the houses under construction on this date it is reported officially that there were 12,752 under construction at that time under schemes by the local authorities, as compared with 26,750 under private enterprise—still another instance of more than twice as many by private enterprise than by the local authorities.

All of which would seem to indicate that the plan of the Conservative Government under the Chamberlain Administration by which it was intended to bring private enterprise back into the field of house building, has been extraordinarily successful in the short time that their scheme had been allowed to work. To put an end to all this activity seems extraordinarily stupid.

The effect of the new Housing law will unquestionably be to put private enterprise out of business. If the new law is allowed to function, we may contemplate a situation in the future where the whole working class population will be housed in municipal dwellings, insofar as they desire to rent, and not buy their houses, and the private landlord will be wiped out. Private enterprise in the letting of houses will be an impossibility in the face of competition with subsidized local authorities, who may find that the local taxes can be drawn upon to meet current charges if necessary.

That this is a step toward the nationalization of dwellings cannot be doubted—a policy which is in keeping with the declared principles of the Labor Party.



## GOVERNMENT HOUSING UNDER THE SCALPEL

The clearest thinking that we have thus far seen on the subject of Government Housing is to be found in a brilliant paper delivered by Major Harry Barnes, a Vice President of the Royal Institute of British Architects and a former Member of Parliament, before the Royal Institute of British Architects last March and recently published in pamphlet form under the title "National Housing—A Proposal for a National Municipal House Building Service". Ernest Benn Limited, 8 Bouverie Street, London, price 2s-6d.

This pamphlet not only contains Major Barnes' Paper read at that time but also the discussion had of it by such leaders in the housing movement as E. D. Simon, then a member of Parliament, George Hicks the Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, H. R. Selley, President of the National Federation of House Builders and Edwin Evans, President of the National Association of Property Owners. It also contains the most searching analysis of Mr. Wheatley's Housing Bill recently enacted by Parliament as the Labor Party's Housing Programme and effective on August 7th last.

Every student of Government Housing, both in theory and in practice, will find it advantageous to obtain a copy of this pamphlet. It is the most searching analysis of the Housing situation in England that has come to our notice.

It also shows under a searchlight the paths where Government Housing, once undertaken, ultimately leads. For, Major Barnes while being in no sense an advocate of Government Housing, has come to the conclusion that "the housing of the lower paid workers must be undertaken as a public service".

Once granted this premise, he holds that the only practical way in which to carry out such a programme is for the nation itself to organize a National House Building Service, training and supplying the labor for the construction of all the houses which the country may ultimately need, producing the building materials that will go to the construction of such houses, and maintaining this service as a permanent part of the Government—just as much as the education of its citizen has become a permanent function of Government.

## THE COST OF HIGH LIVING

After an illuminating discussion of Housing Standards, in which the historical evolution of the adoption of constantly increasingly higher standards is traced, Major Barnes proceeds to a discussion of the cost of housing and pertinently remarks that

We are asking for something better at a time when everything is dearer.

He also sums up the situation tersely by saying:

We are, in the case of such workers, (the lower paid workers) then, in the dilemma that we must either reduce the standard, increase their incomes, or provide them with houses of the standard, irrespective of their rent-paying capacity.

He also reaches the conclusion that "We have said good-bye to private enterprise" in so far as the production of houses for the lower paid workers is concerned.

He advocates cutting cottage building clean out of the main Building Industry, saying that it was never really part of it, and that half of the present trouble is that the two are entangled: pointing out that nearly 90% of the pre-war building industry was engaged on maintenance and repair work and on the erection of industrial and commercial buildings and better class dwellings, and not on workingmen's cottages.

In other words, house building of the kind discussed was merely a *by-product* of the Building Industry. He would, therefore, organize a House-Building Service as part of a national service, analogous to the national system of education—entirely separate and apart from the Building Industry, so that it would not interfere with that industry nor be dependent upon its fluctuations and instability.

He very rightly points out that the country must decide whether it is out to stabilize employment or to provide houses. That if it is the former, something may be done towards stabilizing the building industry by employing it on cottage building in times of depression; but, as he says, "Such a policy would subordinate the needs of those who want houses to the needs of those who only want to build them".

## THE STATE MUST BUILD

His whole scheme is finally resolved to this proposition:

*That the public provision of dwellings for the lower-paid workers is inevitable, that it demands a steady and little varying programme, and that the execution of such a programme without a general inflation of building costs can only be secured by the establishment of a national municipal cottage-building service, apart from the main building industry.*

He would train and equip an industrial army for such a service, and would not observe the present lines of highly specialized demarcation within the building industry, but would make the new workers thus trained available for many more kinds of work than they now are.

As he puts it:

In such a service the craft distinctions, though they could not be obliterated, might be much less marked, as also the distinction between skilled and unskilled labor. This in itself would confer a distinct advantage in cost on such an organization as compared with that employed in private building.

Under Major Barnes' scheme this industrial army would be a mobile force which could be sent to those parts of the country where housing was needed.

That this plan does not commend itself to Labor was made obvious by the objections raised to it by Mr. George Hicks, the able and intelligent leader of organized labor in the building trades of England. The chief reason that Labor opposes any such scheme is that it does not want cottages built primarily to solve the housing problem, but as a means of relieving conditions of depression in the building industry. Major Barnes has rightly pointed out the essential difference between the two ideas.

We wish that we had space to reproduce here the full text of Major Barnes' comments on Mr. Wheatley's Housing Bill. It is the most searching criticism of that measure that we have seen and punctures many bubbles.

## PROGRESS IN GOVERNMENT HOUSING IN ENGLAND

The latest official figures available, viz. as of September 17th last, show the following progress in the development of Government Housing schemes in England. At that time under the 1923 Housing Act there had been included in definite arrangements 115,523 houses. Of these there were a total under construction of 50,524 and in addition 26,347 completed. The average cost of the houses included in contracts let by Local Authorities during the month of August, is given as £397 for Non-Parlor Houses, and £491 for Parlor Houses.

### THE NEW HOUSING ACT

The Minister of Health has recently published a 36 page pamphlet outlining the provisions of the new Housing Act. This is entitled "Circular to Local Authorities on the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act 1924" and incorporates the procedure to be followed by local authorities in working the new Act, as well as the procedure that is continued under the Housing Act of 1923 (The Chamberlain Act).

While this pamphlet deals with the very technical aspect of the new scheme, it is presented in readable form and will give students of Government Housing a very excellent idea of some of the problems involved in this large question.

### LABOR'S POINT OF VIEW

Students of the question of Government Housing who desire to obtain the point of view of the English Labor Government with regard to their recent housing programme, will find this most effectively presented in a pamphlet entitled "Houses To Let" by the Right Hon. John Wheatley, former Minister of Health, published as a 16 page pamphlet and obtainable at the offices of the Labor Party, 32 Eccleston Square, London, S.W. 1, price by mail 1½d. (3 cents). This pamphlet is practically a reprint of the speech delivered by Mr. Wheatley, as Minister of Health in the House of Commons on June 2nd, last, on the Money Resolution providing for the building of 2,500,000 houses in 15 years.



## SLUM CLEARANCE IN ENGLAND

In response to a Parliamentary inquiry the Minister of Health Mr. Wheatley recently stated that 3 slum clearance schemes in the County of London were confirmed in 1923 and 1924, comprising 668 houses, an area of approximately 13 acres and a population of 3,760. He added that several other schemes were under consideration.

In this connection, it has been announced recently that the Minister of Health has been giving consideration to the report of the Unhealthy Areas Committee originally appointed in 1919 of which Mr. Neville Chamberlain (who later became Minister of Health under the Conservative Government) was the Chairman. It was stated that the Minister is very favorably impressed with the recommendation of that Committee that as a temporary measure local authorities should purchase land and dwelling house property in areas which have been declared unhealthy and then renovate and improve the property gradually and manage it on the Octavia Hill system.

It is also stated that the Minister is contemplating giving attention to the recommendation that proposed a revision of the basis of compensation when slum areas are cleared, so that when a landlord allows his property to fall into a condition which is unfit for human habitation he may not receive compensation for the structure.

With the return of the Conservative Government to power and the appointment of Mr. Neville Chamberlain, as Minister of Health once more, it is likely that the recommendations of this Committee will have special consideration by the Government.

## SOCRATES AND HOUSING

All lovers of Ancient Greek will read with delight a deliciously clever bit of satire in the form of a Socratic dialogue on the subject of "Housing" published in the August issue of the journal *Garden Cities & Town Planning*.

It must have given considerable amusement even to England's statesmen, assuming that they have found time to glance at it. It is particularly delightful to revive one's boyhood memories of the study of Greek, and find oneself able to identify some of England's

leading statesmen in their Greek titles: thus we find Ramsay MacDonald as *Makonaldos*: Wheatley, Minister of Health as *Sitonides*: Stanley Baldwin as *Baldovinos*: Asquith as *Æskithos*.

We shall not spoil the rest of this delightful bit of satire for our readers by elucidating it further, but urge them to obtain a copy of this journal and enjoy it for themselves. It is not only a very delightful bit of irony but a shrewd analysis of the existing housing situation in England.

## THE POSSIBILITIES OF NEW MATERIALS

In connection with the discussion of the Housing Bill in its passage through Parliament, there have been raised many suggestions as to the possibility of reducing costs through the use of new materials other than the standard form of construction which prevails in England of brick buildings.

One of the chief difficulties at the present time of securing speed in construction, as well as cheapness, has been the limited supply of brick—and especially the limited supply of brick-layers and the long time necessary to train apprentices in this highly skilled trade.

In August, when the Housing Bill was in its final stages, a Resolution was moved in the House of Lords by the Earl of Middleton, and accepted by the Government, to the following effect:

That this House resolves that, having regard (1) to the great charge on public and municipal funds involved in the Bill; (2) to the deficiency of skilled labor and increasing cost of materials; (3) to the consequent delay and enhanced cost in erecting the necessary houses, an immediate inquiry should be set on foot by H. M. Government as to the possibility of building houses of other materials than brick, which could be erected more rapidly and at less cost.

In accepting this Resolution, the Lord Chancellor said the Government welcomed the motion and would be glad to consider any plan that would produce houses cheaply and quickly.

Acting on this Resolution, the Government announced in the latter part of September the appointment of such a Committee with the following terms of reference, and constituted as follows:

To inquire and report as to new materials or methods of construction which are or may be available for the building of houses for the working classes and to make recommendations as to the organiza-

tion required for securing the adoption and use of approved new materials or methods by local authorities and other bodies or persons providing such houses.

The personnel of the Committee appointed as announced, gives great confidence in the soundness of its ultimate recommendations; for, it includes in its membership men who have been close students of the housing question, from all points of view. The Committee is constituted as follows:

Sir Ernest Moir, Bart. M. Inst. C. E. (Chairman). Has been engaged on numerous public works, including the Blackwall Tunnel, Surrey Commercial Dock and its Extensions, Admiralty Harbor, Dover, and the Great Northern and City Railway.

Sir Frank Baines, C. B. E., M. V. O.; Director of Works of H. M. Office of Works, and has charge of the Royal Palaces and Houses of Parliament.

Sir Charles T. Ruthen, O. B. E., F. R. I. B. A.; Consulting Chief Inspector of Government Official Accommodation, H. M. Office of Works.

Major Harry Barnes, V. P., R. I. B. A.; F. S. I. Liberal member for East Newcastle 1918-1922, Alderman L. C. C.

Mr. John A. Brodie, City Engineer of Liverpool since 1898. Member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and Past President of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

Mr. Richard Coppock: General Secretary of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives and Member of the National House Building Committee appointed by the Minister of Health.

Mr. Edward R. Forber, C. B. E.; Director-General of Housing, Ministry of Health 1920.

Mr. George Hicks: Of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives and Member of the National House Building Committee.

Mr. H. J. C. Johnston: Director of the Leeds Fireclay Co. Ltd., and Chairman of the Materials Section of the National House Building Committee.

Lieut.-Col. Cecil B. Levita, C. B. E., M. V. O., D. L., J. P., Chairman of L. C. C. Housing Committee. In 1914 he was recalled to service in Regular Forces.

Mr. Wm. H. Nicholls; Chairman of the National Allied Building Trades Employers, and Chairman of the National House Building Committee.

Mr. A. G. White, General Secretary of the National Federation of Building Trades Employers and Member of the National House Building Committee.

Mr. C. E. Whyte.

Mr. J. Wilson, F. R. I. B. A..

Mr. T. H. Sheepshanks, of the Ministry of Health, Secretary of the Committee.

With such men as Sir Frank Baines, Sir Charles Ruthen, Major Harry Barnes, Edward R. Forber, George Hicks, William H. Nicholls and A. G. White, the Committee is bound to bring in recommendations which will have public confidence.

## NEW METHODS OF BUILDING

### 3,000 BRICKS A DAY

England is very much aroused by the possibility of reducing the cost of construction of government houses by the application of new methods of building and by the use of new materials. Two striking object lessons have been recently given in England in both these fields.

One concerns itself with an improved method of laying brick by which the services of a skilled bricklayer can be dispensed with for most of the work, and any unskilled laborer or ex-service man can lay brick satisfactorily.

It is stated that under this new process which has been invented by Mr. Brownlow of an old established firm of builders in Tonbridge, Kent, that 3,000 bricks a day can be laid by an ordinary worker in place of the 200 to 300 bricks a day that are now laid by a skilled bricklayer. What this tenfold increase in output in the bricklaying field will mean in reducing the cost of houses can be easily calculated.

From a description of the scheme contained in the magazine, the *National Builder* it would seem as if the new plan was a development of the "Shuttering" used in poured concrete construction. In any event, it is evident that the idea must have been taken from those methods. For, it consists in having some person set the boundaries of the walls by means of metal or wooden uprights, stretching lines between them and putting boards up on these lines, and then letting unskilled workers lay their bricks up against these boards.

As described in the *National Builder*, the scheme is as follows:

When the site of a house has been arranged, uprights—preferably of angle iron—are fixed on the ground level at the four corners, and upright tee pieces are fixed between these at intervals of 10 feet or less; these shorter uprights are fixed quite plumb and form the building line of the house. Boards, usually 10 feet long by 7 inches



deep and 1 inch thick slide inside these angle and tee uprights and form the face against which the bricks are laid.

It is said that any unskilled laborer or ex-service man can place bricks against the inside of these boards knowing that the bricks will be perfectly plumb, being laid against the straight building line. The joints of each row of bricks are crossed, and as soon as three rows are laid another board is slipped into position and another three rows of bricks laid against it, and this procedure is adopted up to the full height of the building. It is claimed 3,000 bricks per day are being laid by this system.

Where houses are built with cavity walls, upright pieces of angle iron and tee iron are also placed inside the inner wall, and boards laid against these in the same manner, forming the building line; so that both the inner and outer walls can be built at the same time from the scaffolding erected outside the building.

Accompanying the article in this journal is an illustration showing Sir W. Joynson-Hicks, Minister of Health under the Conservative Government immediately preceding the present Administration, in workingmen's clothes and with a brick and trowel in his hand laying brick at the rate of 6 a minute under this system.

## NEW MATERIALS

In addition to this somewhat new type of house, the "Winget" method of construction, developed since the war in England and which has found a rather widespread acceptance there, has been used in 200 houses recently erected for the Wakefield Corporation. This is a system of large concrete blocks or slabs, which is said to do away almost entirely with the services of a skilled bricklayer and plasterer.

These concrete houses at Wakefield were recently inspected by Arthur Henderson, the then Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health in company with Raymond Unwin, Chief Architect to the Ministry, and other officials.

All signs would seem to indicate that England is likely to see a material reduction in the cost of housing in the near future, unless the cost is artificially held at its present level by the terms of the agreement which Labor has entered into with the Building Industry—a situation which would be most deplorable and which it is hoped will not happen, and which the recent overturn of the Labor Government will probably prevent.

## NEW MATERIALS ALREADY TRIED

Among the new materials and methods of construction for working men's dwellings that are being advocated to cheapen the cost of housing, one which has attracted much attention is a type of construction developed by Lord Weir. It is described as a house built of timber frame and covered on the outside with steel plates and with wall boarding and bituminous paper on the inside; the chimneys are said to be of reinforced concrete and the roof of asbestos cement on wood rafters. It is stated that houses built in this fashion can be erected very rapidly, in a very short time and at very considerable less cost than the ordinary brick dwelling.

Many kinds of concrete houses are also being advocated. It is obvious that many new methods of construction will develop, as the investigations of the Parliamentary Committee progress.

Lord Weir's timber and steel cottage was erected under factory conditions in 2 to 4 hours. Its cost is given as £300 per house if 1000 houses or more are built on a given site.

Another new type of house which the former Minister of Health is said to have investigated is in actual construction at Glasgow, a house built for the Duke of Atholl constructed with outer walls of steel,  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch thick, and the inner walls of asbestos cement; a third type is a cast-stone cottage.

The *Architect's Journal* is somewhat alarmed over the prospect of 2,500,000 houses being erected in England on a factory production basis, and of a stereotyped form.

If there is any likelihood of such a catastrophe happening, they have reason to be alarmed.

## NEW MATERIALS IN SCOTLAND

Much is expected from a new system of building used in a large housing scheme now under construction in Edinburgh. The method of construction is known as the Airey System, named after the Lord Mayor of Leeds who invented it, and is also known as the Duo-Slab system.

In laying the foundation of a block of new houses on the Lochend Estate in Edinburgh, James Brown M. P. Lord High Commissioner of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said that the 1,000 dwellings which were to be erected on

this system in Edinburgh should serve as an object lesson to other cities in Scotland.

The method of construction is said to have two great advantages. One is that it permits speed in construction; it being estimated that houses under this system can be completed in four months' time. The other advantage is that it does away to a large extent with skilled labor, and thus permits the employment of a large number of the unskilled who are now unemployed, and who constitute the greater number of the unemployed.

As unemployment has been a very vital question in Scotland for the past year or more, the importance of this system for this country cannot be overstated.

The "Duo-Slab" System is not a new one but came into operation as early as 1920. The system, briefly, consists of using blocks of "breeze"—blocks made of clinkers and cement under pressure mixed in a proportion of 6 parts clinkers to one of cement, as a rule made with hand presses on the job. These are set up dry, without mortar, with poured concrete poured into a sort of rigid narrow column behind the joint, thus acting as a brace and providing a concrete upright or rigid post, anchoring and holding the blocks in place. This system permits great speed of construction as it involves no mortar and no trowel work.

## TWO NOTABLE BOOKS ON HOUSING

Every student of the housing problem will find it essential to not only read and study, but to possess, two notable volumes on the housing problem in England, issued within the past year. One of these entitled "Housing—The Past and the Future" by Major Harry Barnes, Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Independent Liberal Party in the House of Commons from 1918 to 1922, a Vice President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and a Member of the London County Council, is probably the most searching and valuable analysis of government housing, in theory and practice, that has ever been written.

A mere statement of the subjects discussed in the various chapters indicates the wide range of the discussion and its very great value:

Dwellings and Rooms, Standards and Measurement, Marriages and Houses, A Century of Housing, Green England and Black

England, Housing Ills and Housing Bills, The £20 House, The Supreme Effort of Private Enterprise, The Favoring Breeze, The Surplus Family, The Shortage in the Decade 1911-1921, The Middle Class House, Scotland, Summary of the Shortage in the Decade 1911-1921, Empties, Replacements, The Present Decade, The Building Industry, Apprenticeship, Dilution, Trusts and Rings, Actual Costs and Economic Rents, Factors in Cost, Factors in Rent, Earnings and Rent, The Rent Restriction Acts, The Probability of Private Enterprise, The Alternative, Land, Materials, Labor, Rates and Taxes, Finance.

Distinctive as the book is for its sane and intelligent treatment of the problems involved, it possesses especial value because of the wealth of statistical information contained in it, all of which has been put in the form of appendices.

These appendices contain the text of the principal Housing Acts, and Acts bearing on Housing from 1851 to 1923; Extracts from the Report on the Collection and Presentation of Official Statistics; Rates of Assessments for the Purposes of Income Tax Schedule "A" and Inhabited House Duty; Definition of Census Terms; Estimates of Housing Needs, Return of Housing Needs made to the President of the Local Government Board in 1918; Housing, Town Planning etc. Act. 1919—Form of Survey; Particulars compiled by the Ministry of Health from the Return made in the "Form of Survey of Housing Needs" issued under the Housing, Town Planning etc. Act 1919, For England and Wales and Scotland; Extracts from the Reports of the Sectional Committee of the Sub-Committee on Building Materials Appointed by the Standing Committee on the Investigation of Prices and Trusts; Estimates prepared by the National Housing and Town Planning Council in July 1922, of the Annual Loss on Building 600,000 Houses in England and Wales to Complete the Number included in the Housing Survey of 1919.

In addition to these appendices, the book also contains various tables, a Bibliography and an Index.

We have seldom seen so much valuable information on any subject compressed into a book of 450 pages. It can be obtained from the publisher Ernest Benn, 8 Bouverie Street, E. C. 4, London, price 25s net.

Besides being valuable for its authoritative information, the book is written in a delightful style and is intensely readable and possesses a clarity of expression and a vision that it is delightful to find in these days.



The opening paragraph of the Introduction is a fair sample of the author's style and his grasp of the subject. We quote it:

Housing has become today what education was in the "seventies", a domestic political question of the first class. Questions become political not because of the facts in regard to them, but because of the feeling about the facts. For long enough the facts may go unregarded and unconsidered, it is only when they attract attention, and when that attention is the attention of a majority, that the question arising from their consideration becomes political.

Speaking of the book, the magazine *The Builder* says of it:

It is at once a survey and a challenge, but because the survey is so conscientious and the evidence amassed so exhaustive and detailed, the challenge gains in importance and is bound to make itself heard. Briefly, Major Barnes contends that private enterprise has never wholly met the housing requirements of this country, that in the present circumstances it is practically impossible for it to regain the efficiency even of pre-war days, and that whether we like it or not we are faced with a permanent State responsibility for housing the "working classes".

## A HOUSING ENCYCLOPEDIA

The other important volume on Housing, which no student of the subject can do without, is the book by Henry R. Aldridge, the leading "Apostle" of Housing Reform in England, and the very efficient and energetic Secretary of the National Housing and Town Planning Council.

Mr. Aldridge's book is entitled "The National Housing Manual" but a man would have to have the hands of a Gargantua to hold this large red book in his hands with any comfort.

What the book is, is not a Manual, but a history of the Housing movement since the beginning of the world; and also a history of the housing movement more particularly in England, and a discussion of that movement and of the various factors and policies that are involved in it.

Even to persons who are not interested in either government housing or in England's housing problems, the book is invaluable for that part which contains a history of the housing movement the world over. A mere statement of the various topics discussed in

it indicates that no person can be without this volume. In the first part, Mr. Aldridge discusses :

Housing in Prehistoric Times, The Primitive Shelter, The Cave Dwelling, The Lake Dwelling, Primitive Houses built on Solid Foundations, Housing in the Period 5000 B.C.—500 B.C., Housing in Ancient Egypt. The Dwellings of the Poor in Ancient Egypt, The Home of a Middle Class Family in Ancient Egypt, Housing in the Assyrian Empire, The Homes of the Poor in the Assyrian Empire, The Homes of the Assyrian Rich, Babylon and its Hanging Gardens, The Homes of the Phoenicians, The Homes of the Phoenician Poor, The Phoenician Colonies—Carthage, The Homes of the Jews, The Housing of the Primitive Aryan Peoples, The Aryan Migration to India, The Homes of the Poor in Ancient India after the Aryan Conquest, The Homes of the Aryan Conquerors in Ancient Egypt, The Aryan Migration to Iran, The Homes of the Poor of Iran, The Homes of the Median and Persian Rich, The Persian Garden, Housing in China and Japan in Ancient Times, Housing in South-Eastern Asia, Housing in South America in Ancient Times, The Homes of Native Races in Ancient Times, Housing in Greece during Pagan Times, The Aryan Conquest of Greece, The Homes of the Grecian Poor, The Home of the Rich Greek in the Time of Pericles, Town Life in Ancient Greece, The Birth of Town Planning, The Greek Home after the Macedonian Conquest.

Another chapter deals with : Housing in Italy Before and During the Period of the Roman Empire, The Homes of the Etruscan Poor, The Homes of the Etruscan Rich, The Aryan Conquest of Italy, Roman Housing Before the Empire, The Roman Hearth, The Homes of Wealthy Romans.

Still another deals with Housing in Europe in the First 1,000 Years of the Christian Era, another with Housing in the Middle Ages ; still another, with The Influence of the Renaissance on Housing Conditions, still another with Housing in the Period between the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution.

This is followed by a chapter discussing Housing in the Hundred Years Succeeding the Industrial Revolution ; and finally the British Housing Reform Movement from 1760-1875, followed by a chapter on Housing Progress in the Years between the Passing of the Public Health Act (1875) and the Commencement of the World War (1914).

Part II of the Book deals with Housing Progress between the Outbreak of the Great War (1914) and July, 1923 ; that is in England.

The Preparation and Adoption by the State of a National Housing Policy is discussed in Part III. Mr. Aldridge is a well-recognized champion of government housing and especially of housing by the local authorities, as distinguished from a centralized control by the Federal Government. The administration of a National Housing Policy is dealt with at length and in detail in another part of the volume.

The texts of the various Housing Acts of England are given in full and the volume contains appendices on every conceivable phase of the housing question, is very fully illustrated with most attractive illustrations and may be summed up in a word as an *encyclopedia* on the housing question. The book contains 520 pages of text with a full index and can be obtained from The National Housing and Town Planning Council, 41 Russell Square, London W. C. 1 England; the price of the book is 45s postpaid; it can be ordered through the National Housing Association in America.

## THE DEMAGOGUE AND HOUSING

How disastrous Government Housing would be in the United States and how this great social issue would soon become a political football, passed about from one demagogic group to another, is well illustrated by the attitude of the average legislator toward Rent Control legislation in New York state.

Fortunately there are few states in the United States where Rent Control laws have been passed. But New York is a notable exception, due largely to the peculiar conditions which exist in the great metropolitan centre of New York City with its population of 6,000,000 people.

This population, moreover, is made up of racial groups representing practically every nation on the face of the globe, and some of which occupy almost dominant positions. One race, for example, has in the 6,000,000 population of the city, a population of 1,000,000; another race a population of nearly 1,000,000 and so on down the line. It is not strange, therefore, that with a political complexion such as this, that the control of rents should have become a political issue.

How the average politician and legislator under our system of government reacts to this kind of a situation is well illustrated by the conduct of the New York legislature at its last session.

Although Rent Control legislation by this time is no new thing in New York State—four years having elapsed since the original Rent Control laws were enacted in 1920—and it therefore cannot be said that the action of the legislators is due to the novelty of the situation, the fact remains that there has been a wild scramble on the part of nearly every representative from New York City to introduce measures that play to the prejudices, passions and, especially, the self-interest of the vast masses of tenants, who control such large numbers of votes as to make their support highly to be sought after by the average politician.

It is a little hard to believe, but the fact remains that 63 different measures affecting the control of rents, chiefly in New York City, were introduced by different members of the legislature at the last session.

That but 6 of these bills became law is something which the State is to be congratulated upon; but, as a symptom of the way in which a great public question is likely to be handled when it becomes a political issue, it is not reassuring.

## WHERE SUBSIDIZED RENT LEADS

Sir Theodore Chambers, the well known English surveyor, Chairman of the Rents Tribunal appointed by the Ministry of Health of England to adjust disputed questions of the rent to be charged by local authorities for houses receiving the government subsidy said recently that in his opinion rents generally are too low, and that "*the government housing subsidy is at present being given unnecessarily to some 70% of the occupants of Council houses.*"

This statement coming from a man like Sir Theodore Chambers—recognized throughout England not only as a hardheaded and able business man whose war services raised him to a high rank in public estimation, but also the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Welwyn Garden City, thus indicating his very deep interest in the betterment of conditions under which people live—carries unusual weight.

The question of the rental to be charged in the houses subsidized by Government has been presented in a most interesting light in the recent Report of the Rents Tribunal of which Sir Theodore is Chairman. In a pamphlet of 30 pages, issued last



June, entitled "Report of Rents Tribunal," the work of this body during a 4-year period, namely from 1920 to 1924 is set forth with great clarity.

The decisions given by the Tribunal have related entirely to those cases in which the question at issue was the sufficiency of the rent charged or proposed to be charged. It appears that it has been the practice of the Tribunal to visit the houses involved and also any houses of comparable standard in the same locality. The majority of cases are then decided after consideration of a written "pleadings" of the parties to the dispute. An oral hearing, either in London or in the city where the houses are located, is generally granted if either party to the dispute makes application to tender oral evidence, or if the Tribunal itself considers this course desirable.

During the period under review 198 cases were referred to the Tribunal. In 78 of these a settlement by agreement was effected eventually after negotiations between the parties involved. The Tribunal issued their Award in 102 of the remaining 120 cases. At the end of March 1924, 18 cases remained to be dealt with.

While many hearings were naturally given in London, hearings were also given at many other places well scattered throughout England, as far west as Plymouth and as far north as Liverpool.

The cases which have come before the Tribunal have applied to a variety of districts in all parts of the country, industrial areas such as Poplar (in London); dormitory areas such as Beckenham, Finchley and Croydon; mining districts such as Cramlington, Gearsley, Risca, Pontardawe and Hetton; and purely rural areas such as Melford, Hitchin, East Stow and Buckingham.

Appended to the Report is a complete statement of the decisions of the Tribunal in every case, also a copy of their model form of "pleading" indicating the kinds of information and presentation of the issue which the Tribunal required before taking up a dispute of this kind. These facts are grouped under the following 8 heads:

Statistics, Rents proposed by Council and Ministry of Health, Assessments of Houses, Chief Industries in the District generally, stating wages, Employment and Wages of the Families occupying the Council's Houses, Schedule showing full details of not more than 6 comparable Houses, Schedule of Houses in Area showing grades of Rents, including Rates (local taxes), The Council's Case.

## THE PREVAILING RENTS

Interesting statistics are found in the Return of Weekly Rents agreed to by the Minister of Health, or awarded by the Rents Tribunal in respect of houses erected with a subsidy, in a statement issued by the Ministry of Health a few months ago, showing in detail the prevailing rent, fixed between certain fluctuating figures of rentals per week (exclusive of rates, taxes and water charges), for the various types of houses:

Living Room, scullery and 2 bedrooms; living room, scullery and 3 bedrooms; living room, scullery and 4 bedrooms; parlor, living room, scullery and 2 bedrooms; parlor, living room, scullery and 3 bedrooms; and parlor, living room, scullery and 4 bedrooms.

The highest rental charged ranged from 19 shillings to 22s-11d per week (not including rates, taxes or water charges). There were practically but 7 houses where these high rents prevailed.

The next highest rental was 15s to 18s-11d per week. Here there were a considerably larger number of houses, chiefly among the parlor houses, where 56 of them were parlor, with 3 bedrooms and 36 were parlor with 4 bedrooms. The next lowest rent ranged from 11s to 14s-11d per week. Here there was a general distribution of houses through all types, ranging from 12 houses of the smallest accommodations viz. living room and 2 bedrooms to 315 houses with parlor and 3 bedrooms.

The houses where the rents range from 7s to 10s 11d per week were the predominating number. Here the number of houses ranged from 62 in the house of smallest accommodation viz. the 2-bedroom house without parlor, to 1001 houses at this rental in the parlor and 3 bedroom type. And, finally, a considerable number of houses were found in which rents were fixed at from 3s to 6s-11d per week, there being 306 such houses of the living room and 3-bedroom type (non parlor house), and 112 of the parlor houses with 3 bedrooms.

These figures have reference to schemes of 1208 local authorities who have erected houses under the 1919 Act.

In 42 districts the rents are less than 4 shillings per week—40 of these being Rural Districts. Rents of over 21s are being obtained in 2 districts, both being Boroughs.

All of these rentals relate to houses built under the so-called Addison scheme, that is when Dr. Addison was Minister of

Health, namely under the Housing Act of 1919. The rentals in these houses were based on pre-war rents plus increases under the Rent Restriction Acts, plus an allowance for amenities.

These intricate questions, of the fixing and adjustment of rentals are merely a few indications of the difficult problems involved in the extension of Government activities to include the providing of houses for vast numbers of people.

They indicate the wisdom of other countries in being slow to embark upon a policy which carries them so far afield of the legitimate field of Government.

## RENT CONTROL AT WASHINGTON

Rent conditions in the District of Columbia are slowly but surely reaching a crisis. Two important features sharply defining the issues and demanding solution have developed this situation.

First, real estate owners and managers have undertaken an aggressive policy in regard to rental increases preparatory to the signing of fall leases, the request for increase being accompanied by a threat of eviction.

Second, tenants have organized into a research body designed to get at the real facts and to establish definitely whether an emergency exists.

Rent legislation—enacted four and a half years ago by the Congress of the United States as a war measure and continued from time to time—has necessitated the threat of eviction which accompanies the raise in rents, since the law requires that rent increases need not be met unless justified by a finding of the Rent Commission, (a body appointed by the President and Confirmed by the Senate to administer the Rents Act). The law also requires a notice to quit to set forth a *bona fide* statement that the owner wants the premises either for his own use and occupancy or to tear down for the purpose of rebuilding. Under the Act he is not entitled to possession merely because he wants a higher rent than the present occupant thinks is fair and reasonable. His rights are in the Commission—just as the tenants' are—and he may seek relief from an unfair situation just as the tenant may, by appealing to the Commission to adjust the rent.

The Washington Real Estate Board, hearing of the organization of the Tenants League, held a meeting, a newspaper report

of which, stated that some 25 members with \$35,000,000. behind them had organized two years ago for the purpose of abolishing the Rent Commission. This—together with the wholesale notices to vacate and quit which had been served on some two thousand tenants—inflamed the minds of the tenants and led to the organization. A mass meeting, largely attended, was held recently at Masonic Temple, and a Resolution was carried to send a letter to the White House asking for public land and army tents and equipment should the occasion arise. The War Department answered that this could be done only by act of Congress. The President stated that he was interested in the District situation and was ready and willing to do whatever was in his power to relieve distress. The League then addressed large national organizations of women, considering the question primarily a women's problem since it relates to home life.

The legal situation has also urged tenants to act. This is a more or less complex situation and one must go into the history of the Commission to explain it. In May of 1922 the Commission heard a case which concerned all the tenants in the Chastleton Apartment House—a large building on Sixteenth Street. The rents were ordered to be decreased, and the value placed on the property in the Commission's finding of facts was less than the then owner thought reasonable—a sale pending at that time. The case was appealed to a higher court of the District of Columbia where the Rent Commission's decision was sustained. It was finally appealed to the United States Supreme Court after further litigation in the Court of Equity.

In the Supreme Court the case was presented by W. Gwynn Gardiner, formerly District of Columbia Commissioner and well known at the District bar. He asked that the act be declared unconstitutional, as of the several dates in 1922 when action had been taken by the lower courts, and when the act had been extended by the Congress. Mr. Justice Holmes wrote the decision in the case,\* remanding it to a lower court where testimony as to an emergency might be taken. But he added, it would seem as a side remark, that were he called upon to decide whether an emergency exists at the present time, his judicial knowledge would dictate a negative answer.

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\* *Housing Betterment*, May, 1924, page 159.



Out of that clause has arisen much confusion of thought and legal dispute. Some lawyers and some judges think it was meant as part of the decision while others think it was merely *obiter*. That clause was the breeding place for new rent cases in the District Courts. Thirty seven injunction cases have been sought estopping the continuance of cases in the Rent Commission and partially paralyzing its activities, at least until test cases or the Chastleton case itself, now resting in the lower court, may be heard and decided.

In the Municipal Court where the provisions of the Rents Act pertaining to the rights of the owner to possession are administered, the judges have been of various minds, some agreeing with the landlords that the Supreme Court had at one stroke eliminated the Rent Commission, when it stated that it had judicial knowledge that no emergency justifying its being exists today, —others labeling it an “aside” and keeping the tenant in possession. Seldom has there been such confusion in landlord and tenant courts.

The Congress, *subsequent to the decision* of the Supreme Court with its now famous “obiter dictum”, had held hearings, had taken evidence on both sides of the question, had made a thorough investigation into the situation and had made a most eloquent gesture, when it decided the emergency still existed by extending the Act until May 22, 1925. An investigation made by a Committee selected by the Senate Committee on the District made a Report on Financing, Building Costs and Housing, which brought out facts in alleged “high financing” startling enough to cause a stir of comment. This report was submitted to the District Attorney. Lack of action with regard to this Report is another element that has aroused the tenants. In their letter to President Coolidge asking for relief, they also requested action on this report of the Senate.

Such is the situation today. The real estate interests are using every effort to make the legislation ineffective. The tenants are doing all they can to arouse public opinion and to try to solve this terrific problem.

CLARA SEARS TAYLOR  
Washington, D. C.

## HIGH RENTS IN CHICAGO

A great exodus of apartment house dwellers in Chicago was recorded last May when the majority of annual leases expired. It was estimated at the time that somewhat over 250,000 Chicago tenants sought new dwelling places in the hope of finding cheaper rent.

It was stated then that a general rent increase of from 15 to 20% was being demanded, and new residents, unacquainted with the real estate situation which existed in Chicago, were naturally asking why should there be such an increase in rental.

"The Chicago situation is, in fact, unique among American cities," T. G. Vance, attorney for the Tenant's League, said recently. "New York and other large cities do not have the same problems that face Chicago tenants because they have rent laws virtually lacking in Illinois."

"Rent increases in Chicago," Mr. Vance said, "are artificial."

"Rents in Chicago are based on rental instead of real values," he continued. "The underlying cause, of course, harks back to the war, when there was a real shortage because new building was at a standstill and rent increases were justified. But this cause no longer seems justified. Our estimates show 40,000 vacant houses today."

As an example of artificial rental values, Mr. Vance cited the following example:

Four years ago a certain apartment house was built with an investment of \$22,000. It was new and attracted tenants seeking new, clean, and modern quarters. It seemed a profitable investment and the apartment house was sold a year later for \$42,000. To net the same return as the original investment rents were increased. This year the \$22,000 apartment house was sold for \$62,000. Two months ago this same building was sold for \$82,000. With each sale the rent was increased to net approximately the same returns the original investment of \$22,000 brought.

That example is typical of 85% of Chicago's housing problems.

A virtually uniform rental scale, he said, had been adopted by landlords of modern apartments.

Basement apartments of four rooms rent for \$50 a month.

Upper apartments of the same size rent for \$85. Two rooms and kitchenette apartments rent from \$60 to \$65, 3 rooms for \$75, 5 rooms for \$95 to \$110, and 6 rooms for \$125.

The greatest number of vacancies are to be found among these larger apartments. Thousands of 5 and 6-room apartments, which in smaller cities would be regarded as crowded quarters, are being vacated in Chicago for smaller flats of 2 and 3 rooms, where tenants adhere in a manner, to a budget allowance based on the salary of the head of the family.

In other instances these larger apartments are being shared by two and three families to bring the rent within their salary limits. Economic conditions revealed in a mass meeting of tenants seeking a solution of the housing problem show a proportionately large number of children being taken out of school to work, part time at least, to aid in meeting advanced rentals.

Instances of eviction were recited because original lessees have sub-let rooms in apartments in violation of their contracts.

An apartment of 5 rooms in an exclusive residence section, which rents for \$125 a month, was found to be occupied by 15 adults. The original lessees were occupying the kitchen, using it as eating and sleeping quarters for husband, wife and child. The other rooms were sub-let to three other families.

"There is no longer any privacy possible even in the better apartments," said Mr. Vance. "This is the immoral phase of the economic situation. In it may be found the answer to the estimated drop of 20% in birth rate in so-called 'all-American' sections of the city.

The economic problem also shows its results in the proportionate decrease in the number of marriages.

Louis A. David, Executive Secretary of the Furniture Movers' Association, said that an unprecedented number of families are preparing to store their furniture and occupy single rooms in apartment hotels.

The actual barometers of "moving" are the utility companies, however, which record an increase of 37% in the number of applications for "shut-offs" for telephone, electric light and gas service this year over last. Last year 180,000 families changed their living quarters, while this year, according to the utility estimates, 248,000 Chicago apartments will lose or change tenants.

## INCREASE IN WAGE EARNERS' RENT

A recent comprehensive Survey of the rental situation in 178 different cities made by the National Industrial Conference Board, shows that compared with the rentals of 10 years ago rents for wage earners' houses have increased 86%, and in the past year, from July 1923 to July 1924, such rents have increased slightly over 6%.

This applies to accommodations of 4 and 5 unheated rooms with bath such as are usually occupied by wage earners and does not relate to more expensive houses and apartments. Despite the fact that the increase in rents for the country as a whole in July, 1924, was 86% higher than in 1914, the investigation by the Board shows that there were 69 cities which had a greater average increase than this and five cities where rents were 150% higher than in 1914. The cities in the latter group are Binghamton, N. Y.; Johnstown, Pa.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Richmond, Ind.; and Scranton, Pa. Forty-four cities reported average rents as having increased 100%, but less than 150% since 1914.

### RENTS STABLE IN 93 CITIES

For the 4 months period, March to July, 1924, no change in rents was reported from 93 cities; there were decreases in 51 cities and increases in 33. The greatest number of increases in average rents were reported from the Eastern section of the country and the greatest number of decreases from the Middle Western section. In the East there were 19 cities where rents increased. The largest increase noted in this section was between 11 and 20% in Johnstown. Eighteen other cities reported increases of 10%, among them Baltimore, Boston, Bridgeport, Buffalo, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Providence and Yonkers. Decreases averaging 10% or less were reported from 10 cities.

In the middle west 23 cities reported decreases in rents and eight other large cities an increase of 10% or less. From the South the reports of changes in rents indicated that there were average decreases between March and July, 1924, in 11 cities while four reported increases. In the far west only two cities reported increases in rent. They were San Francisco and Seattle where rents increased 10% or less.



## RENT AND POPULATION COMPARED

The Survey made by the Board brings out some interesting comparisons of rent increases in relation to the sizes of cities.

There were eight cities of 500,000 population or over where average rents increased not more than 10% ; two with 10% or less decrease, and two which reported no change. In cities where the population was between 250,000 and 500,000, six had an average decrease in rents of 10% or less ; only two had increased 10% or less ; and in five there was no change.

In the cities with a population of 100,000 to 250,000 there was one with an increase of 11 to 20% ; four with increases of 10% or less ; 12 with decreases of 10% or less ; and 26 where no changes in average rents was indicated. In the cities with a population of 50,000 to 100,000, 13 increases of 10% or less were reported ; two increases of 11 to 20% , but decreases in this group were 10% or less in 19 cities, 11 to 20% in two cities while in 32 cities no change had taken place. Among the 42 cities with a population of less than 50,000 from which reports were received by the board, more than half recorded no change in rents during the period from March to July, 1924.

## RENT LAWS IN BOMBAY

That the Far East suffers from problems very similar to those which vex a great metropolitan centre of population in the Western hemisphere, like New York, is evidenced by recent amendments proposed to the Bombay Rent Restriction Act of 1918.

A bill introduced recently in the Bombay legislature is intended to extend the period of operation of the Rent Restriction laws, so far as the Municipal district and Cantonment of Karachi are concerned, until December 31st, 1925. This act had originally been a temporary measure, and as far as this district was concerned expired on August 31st, of this year. This was because the Select Committee appointed to consider a Bill of 1922, which subsequently became the Bombay Act of 1923, reported that this time would be quite sufficient for the act to operate in the Karachi district, as the conditions there were different from those in Bombay. Experience, however, has shown this not to be the case and that there is not sufficient reason for such a distinction

between the two districts. It is therefore now proposed to extend the act, as regards dwelling houses only, to the end of December 1925. As regards other premises, the Act ceased to operate on August 31st, last.

Another purpose of this bill is to prevent the sub-letting of premises by the tenant without the written permission of the landlord. It appears at the present time, owing to the way in which the existing Rent Control laws have been drawn, that there is nothing in these laws to prevent monthly tenants or tenants holding under a lease for an indefinite period, from sub-letting. It is recognized that the evil of sub-letting is a very serious one and should be brought under control; also that very great injustice is worked where the owner of the property is prevented from increasing the rent to a tenant beyond a certain point, and yet that tenant is left free to profiteer and increase rent without restraint.

Thus the laws of economics and of human nature seem to operate in very similar fashion at opposite ends of the universe.

## RENT INQUIRY IN DENMARK

The Ministry of the Interior of Denmark has recently appointed a Committee to investigate housing conditions in that country, with especial instructions to make recommendations for the protection of tenants against rent increases and unreasonable notices to move.

## RENT CONTROL IN COSTA RICA

A Presidential decree was issued on March 22nd, last, effective for a period of 6 months, prohibiting the increase of rents of dwellings, shops or offices above the rentals which prevailed on March 1st—the date of the recent serious earthquake; this, however, does not apply to new houses constructed since that time. Where there are disputes between landlords and tenants, these are to be decided at once by the local administrative authority.

## BROOKLYN'S SITUATION

In a letter sent out recently to the social workers of Brooklyn, John H. McCandless, Secretary of the Housing Committee of the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities, calls attention to conditions which exist in Brooklyn, so far as housing is concerned, in the following terms:

The building of new dwellings has gone on at a rapid rate during the year, keeping pace with the phenomenal growth in Brooklyn's population, and slowly catching up with the war housing shortage. There has been an easing up in the general housing situation, a gratifying growth in the number of home owners, and in the number of those who live in single family houses, but so far all this has not helped the poorer people very much nor is it likely to for some time to come. 70% of Brooklyn people still live in congested tenements. There is very great danger that the general public will be led to believe that Brooklyn's extensive building construction constitutes a complete solution of Brooklyn's housing problem. Such is not the case.

Practically no buildings have been erected within the reach of the working class and the lower income group. There has been a slight increase in the number of apartments for rent, new and old, at about \$10 to \$15 per room per month, as shown in the daily newspaper ads, but below that figure, practically nothing. The great majority of Brooklyn tenement dwellers must pay less than \$12 per week for rent.

Many old dwellings and tenements in the Navy Yard section and other older sections of Brooklyn have been torn down in recent months to make way for factories, business establishments and high class tenements—thus further reducing the number of moderate rental apartments available to poorer tenants.

Rentals have been reduced in high class apartments, and in houses renting at \$75 and above, and further breaks may be expected after the October 1st rental season. But not much reduction has taken place in the older tenements and houses. Rentals are always increased when repairs are made in these older buildings, as all social workers know.

Congestion and overcrowding is still the rule in the populous tenement sections of Brooklyn. Even where families have felt themselves able to buy or rent apartments in the newer houses in Brownsville, East New York, Eastern Parkway and other neighborhoods, at rentals from \$50 to \$100 per month, they are meeting their rent by taking in boarders and lodgers. The lodger evil is just as bad in a new 4 or 5-room apartment as in an old one.

Fear has been expressed on all sides that if and when the Rent laws are repealed this year, as seems likely, rentals will immediately

go up—especially in the older tenements. What this will mean to the families which come to the attention of Brooklyn agencies for assistance of one kind or another, the Brooklyn Housing Committee scarcely needs to emphasize.

Turning to the problem of keeping up standards in existing tenements, the fight this winter will need to be waged with just as much vigor as ever. Congestion, bad sanitary conditions, illegal occupancy, disrepair, fire risks and other dangers to the health and welfare of tenement dwellers exist in about the same proportion as ever. The Brooklyn Housing Committee will continue its policy of calling to the attention of the Tenement House Department and the Health Department, all causes of complaint which come to their attention. We have now on our books over 300 active cases of complaints not yet removed, and we are following these up vigorously.

Apparently little hope can be held out that the Board of Estimate will provide the additional number of inspectors for the Tenement House Department, which have been urgently needed for years and which our committee, the Brooklyn social agencies and public spirited citizens have annually sought to obtain. In spite of the growing population of New York City and the increased number of tenements, there are today no more tenement house inspectors than there were in 1910. The Tenement House Department inspects now on complaint only, instead of making regular inspections of all tenements at stated intervals, as required by the Tenement House Law.

Hence it behooves us as Brooklyn social workers to actually flood the department with the cases which we know exist and which we find every day in our visits to the tenements. The Brooklyn Housing Committee will cooperate vigorously, in reporting complaints and following them up to see that conditions complained of are improved.

## HOUSING FACTS FROM PHILADELPHIA \*

As usual with the reports of the Philadelphia Housing Association, their recent publication, "Housing in Philadelphia" is a valuable discussion of the present situation. Mr. Newman puts squarely up to the municipality the responsibility for the continuance of its bad housing and bad sanitation. "It is not ignorance of the fact," says the Report, "that such insanitation prevails nor is it the lack of city funds to meet the situation, that can account for the contentment with which Philadelphians accept year after year the filth cached in thousands of privy vaults or flowing

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\* *From National Municipal Review.*



through back alleys over pavements that are veritable surface sewers." The city knows of these facts and knows that this situation is a blight to Philadelphia, but does little about it.

### ASSESSMENTS ARE UNFAIR

The Report points out that driven by the emergency of the situation many of their three-story private dwellings are being converted into tenement houses with conditions that are not creditable to the city. It points out that a fair assessment of valuation of property for taxation is not being made and that the small householder is paying more than his full share. Few reports have been more direct and more courageous in pointing out the delinquency of the city in dealing with this vital problem or in putting the responsibility squarely up to the citizens.

The constant check-up of the Philadelphia Housing Association on the enforcement of the city's regulation of housing indicates laxness of enforcement which the Report does not hesitate to criticize scathingly. Certainly no one can disagree with the statement that it is ridiculous to expect 5 city inspectors to cover all the insanitary houses in a community the size of Philadelphia.

Analyzing what is happening in home construction in Philadelphia the association finds that the bulk of homes built during 1922 would have to sell for from \$6,000 to \$9,000 each. Less than 5% are for sale at \$4,000 or less and there are practically no houses under \$3,600. The construction of multiple-family houses is on the increase, although they provide housing accommodations only for people who can afford to pay \$15 a room or more. The housing shortage in Philadelphia instead of being reduced in 1922 was actually increased in spite of the unprecedented number of building permits issued. At any rate, the Report states:

The housing needs of the average citizen have been entirely overlooked, while the housing needs of the small wage-earners who have had their rents raised more than any other group of the city will obtain practically no relief. The result is that a much larger proportion of our population than heretofore is being forced to take the left-overs, buildings not adapted to modern living, dilapidated buildings, tenements or even to give up home life altogether and live as roomers.

The following picture which Mr. Newman presents of Philadelphia may well be used to describe the housing plight of most of our cities:

This is the present situation—a phenomenal housing shortage, an increase in multiple occupancy, more families herded in single rooms than heretofore, cellar living insistent, a building programme almost the largest in the city's history unable materially to reduce the shortage, a large population growth continuing unabated. . . . The housing shortage will affect Philadelphia anti-socially for many years to come, not only in the reaction upon family life resulting from rearing children under abnormal living conditions, but through the opportunity it presents to the rent gouger to ply his nefarious practice.

### IS LOW-COST HOUSING POSSIBLE?

When it comes to the question of low-cost housing the report has some interesting things to say. For instance:

The Housing Association has been much interested in this problem. It does not admit that the small house cannot be built at a cost within the small wage-earner's income and it looks with uneasiness on the tendency to spread the propaganda of the higher priced house as the best that can be offered under present conditions. The gullibility of the public in accepting as a fact the unproved assertions that a lower priced house cannot be built under present conditions would be amusing were it not so serious. The seriousness of the unchallenged acceptance of this propaganda is that it restrains those who might proceed with construction from undertaking low-cost building, while it practically forces the buyers into believing they must buy at any price.

The Association claims that houses can be built suitable for the average family and at a price within their means,

provided cheap building money is available, frills are omitted, and the builders are willing to take a modest profit.

The Housing Association has developed plans upon which bona fide construction bids have been received which show a cost of \$2,650 to \$2,800 per house in units of ten including the builder's profits of about \$550. . . . With low financing costs and a small builder's profit, such houses can be built to rent at twenty-five dollars a month. . . .

This is one of the most striking statements in the report. Most cities which have tried to see their way clear to build houses that

can rent for \$25 dollars a month have found it utterly impossible to do so. The Philadelphia Housing Association is certainly correct in stating that the tendency not only in Philadelphia, but in our other cities, has been to accept as a fact that it is impossible to build homes for people of very low income groups. There has been every evidence to substantiate that belief. If the Philadelphia Housing Association is able to show concretely that it can build houses of 4 rooms with conveniences, to rent for \$25 a month, it will make a great contribution to the housing problem. Many people who have been grappling with this situation will be skeptical until it has been done.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Cincinnati.

## HOUSING PROGRESS IN NEW JERSEY

The Board of Tenement House Supervision of the state of New Jersey, of which C. Ray Swain is Secretary, has recently rendered its Annual Report to Governor Silzer for the year ending July 1st last. As usual, this Report discloses a record of commendable activities and substantial progress in the improvement of housing conditions throughout the state.

During the period under review plans were approved for 1315 new tenement houses to be erected in different parts of the state at an approximate cost of \$44,979,000 and which would provide living accommodations for 12,580 families. In the course of inspection of these new tenements, inspectors of the Board found it necessary to make 36,125 inspections—an average of over 27 inspections for each new building. As the majority of new tenement houses in the state of New Jersey are comparatively low buildings of 3 or 4 stories, and the number of steel frame tall apartment houses is extremely limited, this is a very high number of inspections per building.

While the officials of the Board take this large number of inspections as a proof of commendable activity, the figures are susceptible of a different interpretation. From the point of view of efficient administration they seem rather in the nature of an indictment of its administration; for, an efficient system ought not to make necessary an average of more than 6 to 10 inspections on each new tenement under construction.

Perhaps the situation, complained of by the Board, by which builders occupy their new buildings before the issuance of a certificate holds the key to the reason for so many inspections. For, it would seem by this time, after the lapse of nearly 20 years since the Board was created, that it should have brought the inspection of new buildings to such a stage of law enforcement, that it would not be necessary at the present time to comment upon the failure of builders of new structures to build them according to law, and to receive certificates before occupying them.

Possibly the Board has not had from the Legal Department of the state that degree of support in the prosecution of such cases that it should have had, but the record, as given without qualifying explanation, is not a creditable one; and we strongly urge the present officials to see to it that a change is brought about in the near future, by which every builder in the state of New Jersey may be made to realize that the occupancy of a building without a certificate is a serious violation of the law, and will not be tolerated.

New York could have had the same experience when the tenement house law was put into operation in 1901, had not the officials at that time faced their responsibilities with courage and determination and adopted the policy of summarily vacating every tenement house that was thus illegally occupied.

As soon as the builders of new tenement houses realized that the new policy was really meant, and that it would be literally enforced, they very quickly found it advantageous to comply with the terms of the law.

We predict that the tenement builders of New Jersey will show a similar willingness to comply and make legal proceedings unnecessary, if the same degree of backbone is displayed by the New Jersey officials.

In addition to inspecting new tenement houses in course of construction, the Board has had much to do on the other side of its responsibilities and has made 6,988 original inspections of existing and occupied tenements in 39 different municipalities removed at some distance from headquarters. In addition, the Inspectors of the Board made 59,074 reinspections in the process of securing the removal of violations of various kinds.

Towards improving the conditions of the older houses, built before the present tenement house laws were in effect, the



Board caused windows to be cut into the cross partitions of 611 interior rooms enabling these otherwise dark and unventilated rooms to borrow a little light and air from adjoining rooms.

The Report states that the antiquated back-yard privy vault is fast disappearing, and that during the year 578 sanitary water closets were installed within tenement houses, taking the place of these antiquated conveniences. This is a most important step in advance and it is hoped that the time will soon come when the State of New Jersey will be in the same position in this regard as is the City of New York, viz., with not a single back-yard privy vault, whether sewer-connected or not, in existence in connection with a tenement house where there is a public sewer in the street or adjacent thereto, or reasonably accessible.

The Report contains other interesting information showing the activities of the Department, one of which concerns itself with the erection of 1479 fire escapes on tenement houses 3 stories or over in height.

Taking it all in all, the record of the Board is a very commendable one, and it is to be hoped that in the near future the Board will receive more adequate appropriations from the state authorities and more effective support from the Law Department of the state so as to bring about a stricter and better compliance with the law.

## A STATE HOUSING ORGANIZATION BECOMES ACTIVE

Benjamin H. Ritter has been appointed Field Secretary of the Pennsylvania Housing and Town Planning Association, with offices in the new Social Service Building in Philadelphia. This appointment is the result of the State Conference held in conjunction with the National Housing Conference in December of last year.

The Association, under the direction of Mr. Ritter, proposes to make surveys, stimulate sanitary and housing inspections, check up insanitary and overcrowded occupancy and in cooperation with state and local authorities outside of Philadelphia encourage better living conditions for workingmen's families in Pennsylvania.

Among the plans of the Association is the organization of a technical advisory service to place at the disposal of the munici-

palties, expert counsel on all housing and sanitary problems, including city planning and Zoning.

Its immediate Programme may be stated as follows :

1. To favor and support, during the next session of the state legislature, an Enabling Act, permitting municipalities to draft and enforce housing and sanitary ordinances.
2. To encourage 3rd-class towns and boroughs and 1st-class townships to adopt ordinances embodying the Rules and Regulations of the State Health Department, approved Sept. 23, 1923.
3. To inspect and check up on previously reported bad housing and sanitation sufficiently to determine the prevalence of such conditions as evidence of needed reform, and if still bad, report it to the State Health Department, and maintain sufficient follow-up to see that proper corrections are made.
4. To collect and tabulate all available data regarding community building and betterment projects, inspect such projects now under construction, study their plans and then encourage leading citizens of other cities to undertake and underwrite similar projects.
5. To stimulate local governmental units to take advantage of existing laws authorizing Planning Board and Zoning Commissions to the end that each such unit adopt a workable programme along these lines.
6. To stimulate local groups in as many communities as possible to study local housing needs and take action necessary to bring about housing reform.

The Association has recently issued a 4 page pamphlet, "Better Housing for Pennsylvania," in which it sets forth the nature and activities of the organization and discusses briefly the main housing problems in Pennsylvania under the heads of Housing Shortage, Rent Profiteering, Insanitation and Unsafe Conditions, City Planning and Zoning, and Need of Better Housing Laws.

## PHILADELPHIA'S HOUSING SHORTAGE CONTINUES

In spite of Philadelphia's phenomenal dwelling construction programme for the past few years, no relief has been given to the housing shortage. The estimates of the Philadelphia Housing Association, based upon field surveys of housing operations, show that the completed new housing for the past 3 years lacks approxi-

mately 1335 new accommodations of caring for the normal growth, bringing the shortage as of January 1, 1924 up to about 21,000 dwellings.

Of the total number of dwellings under permit during these 3 years, 17,523 accommodations were completed at the close of 1923; which would care for about 78,854 individuals. Philadelphia's population increased about 28,288 each of these years, representing a total increase of 84,864 persons; thus indicating a housing deficit, in excess of 1920, affecting over 6000 persons.

Not only has Philadelphia fallen short of providing new housing accommodations sufficient to care for its population increase, but it has fallen behind nearly every other large city in the United States in this respect. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the ratio of families provided for, to each 10,000 of population in Philadelphia as of specified year is as follows: in 1921, 12.9, in 1922, 55.2, in 1923, 46.7. This is much lower than the average of 258 cities of the United States with population of 10,000 and over, whose rates ran: 1921, 59.7%; 1922, 97.8% 1923, 115.3%.

### CONVERSION GAINS OFFSET BY DEMOLITIONS

The number of legal conversions of dwellings to multi-family use might have provided additional housing facilities in Philadelphia, were they not offset by demolitions, which reduced the available city housing supply. Accurate demolition data for 1921 and 1922 are not at hand, but available records indicate that such demolitions exceed conversions for these years. In 1923 alone, the demolitions dehoused 988 families, composed of 6180 persons. Thus, the houses destroyed deprived more families of homes than legal conversions could accommodate.

### WHY PHILADELPHIA LAGS

The failure of the city to prepare land in advance for commercial builders, by street grading and the installation of water mains and sewers is partly responsible for the inconspicuous place Philadelphia occupies among the other large cities of the United States in plans for new housing. Another important factor is the difficulties which prospective purchasers experience in obtaining second mortgage money through Building and Loan Associations.

If Philadelphia will expedite the opening of new areas, and if real estate interests, working with the Secretary of the State Department of Banking will help to restore practices of Building and Loan Associations to their original purpose, Philadelphia may hold a more enviable position among the big cities of the country, and greater relief will be provided for the housing shortage.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia.

## \$500 PRIZE FOR LOW COST HOUSE OFFERED IN CINCINNATI

To stimulate interest in building lower cost homes the Better Housing League of Cincinnati has offered a \$500 prize for the best house selling complete with the lot for \$5500. The time allowed for completing the construction extends to December 1, 1925. The following are the terms of the award.

1. The house complete with the lot must be sold or offered bona-fide for sale between April 21, 1924 and December 1, 1925, at a price of not to exceed \$5,500.

2. The contest is open freely to any resident of Cincinnati. Each contestant must submit his name and address in writing to the Better Housing League of Cincinnati together with the location of the proposed building before the first tier of beams has been constructed. If the contestant is other than the owner, such contestant must have previous consent of the owner or effect a mutual agreement with the owner whereby they enter into the contest jointly.

3. No restrictions are placed upon the size or shape of the lot or upon the materials or methods of construction except that the building must comply in all respects with the requirements of the Cincinnati building code.

4. The house must be located within 10 miles of the Government Building, Fountain Square, Cincinnati and must be within the limits of Hamilton County.

5. The building must be a single detached house of at least 5 rooms and bath, must be provided with a furnace, sewer system, electricity, inside water and must be finished complete except for papering and tinting, screens and shades, sodding and fencing.

6. Each contestant must agree that in the event the prize is awarded to him he will open the house freely to inspection by the public for a period of not less than two weeks.



7. Each contestant must further agree that in the event the prize is awarded to him he will permit the Better Housing League to publish the plan of the house, cost of the improved lot, cost of the building itemized as to each branch of the work, and other pertinent information which in the opinion of the Better Housing League may be helpful in encouraging the construction of low cost homes.

8. The Better Housing League reserves the right to make no award in the event that there are not at least three separate bona-fide competitors for the award, or in the event that no house submitted in the contest complies with reasonably good housing standards.

The following committee which has defined the above requirements of the contest will determine the winner of the award.

A. O. Elzner, Elzner & Anderson, Architects, Chairman.

Geo. R. Hauser, Commissioner of Buildings.

Mrs. Adolph G. Wulff, President League of Women Voters.

James Wilson, President Pattern Makers League of North America.

H. D. Lohring, Ferro-Concrete Construction Company.

These conditions have been given publicity in all of the local newspapers and have been sent to builders, architects and real-estate men. It is as yet too soon to know how many will compete. The few who have indicated their intention to participate in the contest up to the present time shows how difficult it is to-day to build a low-cost house. It is expected that in the spring there will be an addition to the list of participants.

BLEECKER MARQUETTE  
Cincinnati

## PHILADELPHIA'S NEW GARBAGE COLLECTION PLAN

The Division of Street Cleaning in Philadelphia is trying a new plan of garbage collection, which, according to the Philadelphia Housing Association, has proven eminently successful in improving the sanitary condition of alleys at the rear of dwellings.

The new plan calls for the placing of all garbage and refuse containers at the curb in front of the house, instead of in the rear alley as was formerly done, and the adoption of the "gang collection" system by a fleet of three or four wagons, with foreman

supervision, responsible for complete collection three times a week in specified areas. These gangs take the place of the one man collector, working without supervision, who was formerly supposed to make daily collections, but who often neglected household refuse for a week at a time.

Under the new plan the collectors work on schedule, and thus housekeepers are able to place receptacles out at a specified time, with the assurance that shortly thereafter they may be taken into the house again. It is estimated that one hour three times a week, is the longest time a garbage can need be seen on the street.

The inspectors from the Housing Association are finding the alleys in the experimental area, swept clean and washed. They are entirely devoid of refuse and trash, with no unsightly garbage containers to be seen. There is a conspicuous improvement in the sections where complaints of garbage and filth had previously been numerous.

It was not an uncommon experience, prior to this experiment, to find side by side with the tightly covered metal garbage cans as required by law, in a large percentage of the alleys, a preponderance of containers of various descriptions:—wooden crates, boxes and peach baskets. Many of these often were overturned by cats and dogs, and their contents strewn over the alley. Where surface drainage prevailed, because of lack of sewers, these alleys were in a filthy condition. The new plan will check this, for, the containers are kept within the property except when the garbage wagon is due.

In addition, the housekeepers approve of the new method, which has stimulated the purchasing of new metal garbage cans with tight fitting covers.

The new system divides the responsibility for successful garbage collection between the householder and the collector and the results in the experimental area seem to be sufficiently satisfactory to encourage the authorities to extend the plan permanently over the entire city. Another fact which should increase its popularity is that it is more economical; for, in addition to the results being more satisfactory, fewer collectors are needed and much less time is required.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN  
Philadelphia

## NEGRO HOUSING IN BALTIMORE

A recent study of housing conditions in the City of Baltimore made by the U. S. Department of Labor indicates that the housing condition of the negroes of that city is rather favorable. It appears that the colored population which numbers 108,322 is being gradually increased by the arrival of negroes from the South, and as they arrive new sections of the city are being opened to them.

Conditions naturally vary greatly in different parts of the city. The Report says:

Small streets and alleys are still, unfortunately, the abiding places of large numbers of colored people of limited means, who are crowded into small dwellings. Yet, with the exception of these small and limited localities, the problem of housing congestion in Baltimore is not a serious one.

The typical house occupied by the average colored person in Baltimore, according to the Report—including both the newly opened sections and those in which they have long resided—is a 2-story brick structure containing from 6 to 16 rooms and ranging up to \$10,000, in value; 45% of these properties were owned by their occupants, who, after buying them had “where it was necessary” improved them by putting in modern heating appliances, electric light, hardwood floors and other modern improvements.

Rental values ranged from \$16. to \$80. a month.

It is stated that in 40% of the cases considered, there was no sub-letting of rooms, the householder and his immediate family occupying the whole dwelling.

So far as the general construction of the houses are concerned, the Report states that there is virtually no difference in the facilities available for whites and negroes in Baltimore; that with regard to rent and modern conveniences colored tenants as a rule pay a higher rent and get poorer shelter and facilities than the whites. Inquiry sustains this charge so far as prices are concerned, these being described as slightly higher for properties occupied by negroes than for similar accommodations provided for white tenants.

Summing up the situation as a whole, the Report says :

In its entirety, the housing situation among the colored people of Baltimore, seems to bear no symptoms of unusual needs, or indicate any crisis of shortage such as has appeared in several other cities. A normal housing adjustment, in keeping with the city's negro populace, is apparently ever applicable to each individual case, as the necessity arises.

## PLUMBING ESTABLISHED AS A SCIENCE

What promises to constitute the most important study that has been made in connection with the Building Industry, and what marks a new era in the treatment of a sanitary problem is found in the Report of the Committee on Plumbing of the Hoover Building Code Committee, recently submitted under the title "Recommended Minimum Requirements for Plumbing in Dwellings and Similar Buildings."

The acceptance of the Chairmanship of this Committee by George C. Whipple, Professor of Sanitary Engineering in Harvard University and the country's leading sanitary expert, ensured a Report which would commend itself both to the authorities and to the lay public.

Professor Whipple and his Committee have, however, far exceeded the expectations of those who have followed this subject for some years.

For, this Report literally marks a new era in the development of Sanitary Science.

The Committee took nothing for granted, but through a series of sanitary tests carried on by the U. S. Bureau of Standards, under the Committee's direction, in cooperation with the head of that Bureau, the actual facts as to the physics of plumbing have been accurately ascertained through experimental and theoretical investigations practically for the first time in the history of the science of plumbing.

These experiments carried on at the U. S. Bureau of Standards have concerned themselves with such questions as :

Rates of Discharge from Plumbing Fixtures, Determination of the Peak Load in any Plumbing System, Capacities of Stacks and Drains, Characteristics of Flow of Water in Partially Filled Vertical Pipes, Vent Requirements, Siphonage of Fixture Traps, Factor of Safety in a Plumbing System, Simplification of Plumbing Construction, Separate Floor Lay-outs Tested, Tests of Complete Plumbing Installation, Recommended Construction Details.



Out of 260 text pages of its complete Report 120 pages are given up to the results of this experimental work, very fully illustrated by diagrams, charts and tables.

The Report consists of four main Divisions :

1. General Considerations.
2. Recommended Plumbing Code for Dwellings and Similar Buildings.
3. Experimental Investigations, Standardization, Administration and Comments.
4. Appendices.

Under "General Considerations" such important matters are discussed as the Regulation of Plumbing, its Relation to Health, that Public Control of Plumbing is Justifiable, and the Legal Principles on which such Control is Based.

There is also a chapter given up to the Present Status of Plumbing Regulations, the Supervision of Plumbing Inspection and Conclusions Based on Scientific Procedure.

A final chapter contains a set of Basic Plumbing Principles.

The chief value of this Report lies in the fact that it is based upon the *performance* of plumbing systems in practice and not upon rule of thumb theory, the principle which has unfortunately heretofore been the basis of most of the plumbing ordinances in vogue in the great majority of our American cities.

Mr. Hoover has aptly expressed the situation in his letter of acceptance of the Report. He says :

Although the American people have expended hundreds of millions of dollars for plumbing installations, the principles of their general lay-out have never been thoroughly understood. Actual practice has been governed by opinions and guess-work, often involving needless costly precautions which many families could ill afford. The lack of generally recognized principles is responsible to a certain extent for the contradictory plumbing regulations in different localities.

Thanks to the work of the Sub-Committee and of the Bureau of Standards, the whole situation is altered, and there is now a scientific basis upon which state and local codes and small dwelling installations may be based.

The way is open for effective standardization of plumbing supplies, with reduced costs to the industry and savings to the consumer.

The Report is so valuable that one is tempted to quote freely

from it but unfortunately limitations of space will only permit reference to one or two of the high spots of this important document.

## PLUMBING AND HEALTH

In discussing the Relation of Plumbing to Health, the Report has the following to say:

The leakage of polluted water from the house-drainage system is insanitary and dangerous. Leakage within the house may pollute the habitation and permit food infection through the medium of insects. Leakage in the ground outside the house may pollute water supplies taken from neighboring wells or find its way into or under the building. The maintenance of water seals between fixtures and drains and the permanent tightness of plumbing systems are important not only because they prevent the passage of air, but because they prevent the access of insects to the interior of the drains and sewers. If cockroaches, water bugs, and other vermin can pass from drains to food, they may transport disease germs, and thus be a bacteriological menace to health. It is therefore important that the drainage system be tight and without danger of leakage.

Again the Report says:

The air in sewers and drains often contains gases resulting from the decomposition of excreta, soap, fats and other wastes, together with gases from mineral oils which may come from garages, streets and industrial establishments. Illuminating gas may also find its way into sewers through leakage. Among these gases may be found merthane, sulphuretted hydrogen and carbonic oxide. In large amounts those gases are poisonous to the human system, and there are physiological objections to breathing them even in small quantities. Hence, the air of sewers or drains should be kept from entering buildings intended for human habitation or occupancy by the use of proper plumbing installations and by suitable ventilation of the rooms or compartments in which the plumbing fixtures are located. The smell of these gases and other emanations from decomposing organic matter is naturally repugnant to human beings. It not only offends the sensibilities, but may produce shallow breathing, headache and even nausea.

Discussing the question of whether escaping sewer air has any influence on health or not, the Report says:

Hence, it has been argued by some that escaping sewer air has no influence on health. The Committee does not agree with this conclusion. Health may be influenced by factors which do not cause specific diseases; for, there are chemical and physiological as well as bacteriological factors involved.

## 20 BASIC PRINCIPLES

In addition to a Recommended Plumbing Code, which can with slight changes be adopted by every community in the United States, the Committee has been at pains to enunciate a series of 20 Basic Plumbing Principles, as follows:

1. All premises intended for human habitation or occupancy shall be provided with a supply of pure and wholesome water.

2. Buildings in which water-closets and other plumbing fixtures exist shall be provided with a supply of water adequate in volume and pressure for flushing purposes.

3. The pipes conveying water to water-closets shall be of sufficient size to supply the water at a rate required for adequate flushing without unduly reducing the pressure at other fixtures.

4. Devices for heating water and storing it in "boilers", or hot-water tanks, shall be so designed and installed as to prevent all dangers from explosion and also prevent a back flow of hot water through a meter connected with a public water supply.

5. Every building intended for human habitation or occupancy on premises abutting on a street in which there is a public sewer shall have a connection with the sewer, and, if possible, a separate connection.

6. In multiple dwellings provided with a house-drainage system there shall be for each family at least one private water-closet.

7. Plumbing fixtures shall be made of smooth nonabsorbent material, shall be free from concealed fouling surfaces, and shall be set free of inclosures.

8. The entire house drainage system shall be so designed, constructed, and maintained as to conduct the waste or sewage quickly from the fixture to the place of disposal with velocities which will guard against fouling and the deposit of solids and will prevent clogging.

9. The drainage pipes shall be so designed and constructed as to be proof for a reasonable life of the building, against leakage of water or drain air due to defective materials, imperfect connections, corrosion, settlements or vibrations of the ground or building, temperature changes, freezing, or other causes.

10. The drainage system shall be provided with an adequate number of cleanouts so arranged that in case of stoppage the pipes may be readily accessible.

11. Each fixture or combination fixture shall be provided with a separate, accessible, self-scouring, reliable water-seal trap placed as near to the fixture as possible.

12. The house-drainage system shall be so designed that there will be an adequate circulation of air in all pipes and no danger of siphonage, aspiration, or forcing of trap seals under conditions of ordinary use.

13. The soil stack shall extend full size upward through the roof and have a free opening, the roof terminal being so located that there will be no danger of air passing from it to any window and no danger of clogging of the pipe by frost or by articles being thrown into it or of roof water draining into it.

14. The plumbing system shall be subjected to a water or air-pressure test and to a final air-pressure test in such a manner as to disclose all leaks and imperfections in the work.

15. No substances which will clog the pipes, produce explosive mixtures, or destroy the pipes or their joints shall be allowed to enter the house-drainage system.

16. Refrigerators, ice boxes or receptacles for storing food shall not be connected directly with the drainage system.

17. No water-closet shall be located in a room or compartment which is not properly lighted and ventilated to the outer air.

18. If water-closets or other plumbing fixtures exist in buildings where there is no sewer within reasonable distance, suitable provision shall be made for disposing of the house



sewage by some method of sewage treatment and disposal satisfactory to the health authority having jurisdiction.

19. Where a house-drainage system may be subjected to back-flow of sewage, suitable provision shall be made to prevent its overflow in the building.

20. Plumbing systems shall be maintained in a sanitary condition.

The Report also contains a Report on the Standardization of Plumbing Materials, and upon Administration, and especially upon the much discussed question of the licensing or registration of both master and journeyman plumbers.

No student of housing, no health officer, no student of sanitary science, no architect—in fact, we are inclined to say, no householder—should be without this important document.

The Report contains 250 pages of text and 100 illustrations and is obtainable from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. at 35 cents a copy.

## HOUSING CONDITIONS AND THE USE OF LEISURE

Under the title of “The Influence of Housing Conditions on the Use of Leisure”, Raymond Unwin, the distinguished British Town Planner, has prepared for presentation at the International Labor Conference held at Geneva this summer an interesting Paper on the value and the influence of Garden Cities from the point of view of the intelligent use of leisure.

As was expected, any writing of Mr. Unwin’s is bound to have a value far greater than the particular use or purpose for which it was intended, and this is particularly so in the case of this Paper.

All students of the housing movement and of town planning will find themselves not only particularly interested in this delightful presentation of the subject but will find in it a wealth of material to buttress and reinforce the arguments for improvement of the living environment.

What Mr. Unwin brings out especially about the value of having places in which men can carry on various handicrafts, for those who do not wish to read and who can employ themselves in de-

veloping the skill of the hand, is particularly valuable and we think is entirely novel as an argument for the establishment of Garden Cities.

This Paper was published in full in the Journal of the Town Planning Institute for September, and has subsequently been issued in pamphlet form by the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation.

## THE BETTER HOMES MOVEMENT

The Better Homes Campaign for 1924 gave evidence of the largely increased effectiveness of this movement, the records of the National Headquarters in Washington showing that over 1,000 communities participated in the campaign this year.

The first prize of \$500 was award to Kalamazoo, Michigan for its effective and comprehensive demonstration. The house which received this award was of unusual architectural merit in its plan, and unique in many of its special features, and was designed by the local committee and built for \$6300.

The second prize of \$200 went to Atlanta, and the third prize of \$100 to Greenville, S. C., while four prizes of \$50 each went to Fairmont, W. Va., Lockport, N. Y., New Rochelle, N. Y. and West Palm Beach, Florida, showing how widespread the movement is.

## HANDSOME HOMES COMPETITION

The Chattanooga Tennessee Real Estate Board has recently inaugurated a Handsome Homes Competition and is urging the question as to which is the most beautiful home in that city.

The National Association of Real Estate Boards, taking up the idea is giving it application to the whole country and is asking realtors in every city to consider the question of what is the most beautiful home in their city, and what are the points on which a Handsome Home ought to be scored in a prize competition as judges now score Hereford bulls, Wyandotte chickens, prize babies and bathing beauties.

In the Chattanooga contest, 10 entrants will be chosen by popular ballot, in the competition. From these a Committee composed of architects, garden club members and a realtor will select the winners.

The winning house may be a queenly aristocrat of the boulevards or a bungalow with roses climbing and twining about it, after the fashion of Pickfordian curls, it is announced. Personality will count. Method of laying out the grounds, unique arrangement of rooms, and general utility of the house will be considered, in making the decision.

Here is a possible score card for a Handsome Homes competition, as sponsored by Herbert U. Nelson, Executive Secretary of the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

1. Planting, landscaping, 10 points.
2. Exterior architecture of house, 20 points.
3. Exterior ensemble, proper placing of house in relation to grounds, and consistency of landscape plan with the general style of the house, 10 points.
4. Interior; skill and ingenuity shown in arrangement of rooms for comfort and convenience, 30 points.
5. Interior Decoration, 15 points.
6. Livable quality of the house, its homelike quality, 15 points.

## TWO FAMILY HOUSES

A new Plan Book is that issued by the Curtis Companies, makers of building woodwork and trim. This is a 24-page very attractively printed pamphlet showing 20 different types of attractive two-family houses.

In addition to the very charming elevations which are published as well as the floor plans, each page also carries illustrations of various details of the house; in one case a bay window, in another a hanging china closet, in another a fireplace or a kitchen dresser.

The houses have been developed with great architectural skill, and a very real service has been rendered to the cause of better housing through the publication of this book. Copies can be obtained from the Curtis Companies at any one of their branch offices in New York, Pittsburgh or Baltimore, or at their home office at Clinton, Iowa.

## THE SIZE OF BRICKS

That the question of utilizing every means of reducing the cost of construction—and especially the important element of labor

cost—in the building of houses, is one which is giving concern to the whole civilized world, is evidenced by the recent introduction in the English Parliament of a Bill fixing the dimensions of bricks used in housing schemes subsidized by the State.

This measure, sponsored by a Mr. Sunlight—happily named for one interested in housing—proposes that by Act of Parliament the sizes of all bricks used in the housing schemes subsidized by the State shall be 9 inches long by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick.

Advocating this measure, its sponsor pointed out that great economies in cost of construction would result, if bricks of this larger size were adopted, but his plea had scant consideration from either the Labor Party then in power or from the Opposition, as it was felt that any such radical change within the building industry ought to be controlled by the building industry itself.

## CO-OPERATIVE APARTMENTS

A new book has recently been published on the organizing, selling and operating of Co-operative Apartment Buildings, by the Co-operative Apartment Association of Chicago.

This book tells how to organize, how to sell and how to operate co-operative apartments, with complete legal and record forms and contains information which it has taken 9 months to assemble. The legal and record forms have cost the publishers thousands of dollars in attorney's fees. It outlines the organization, sale and operation of Co-operative apartments step by step. The methods given are those which experience has demonstrated are sound.

Speaking of this new publication, the National Association of Real Estate Boards has recently said:

Insurance against costly mistakes in the organization of tenant-ownership of apartment buildings is provided in a system of standardized methods for co-operative apartments approved by the Co-operative Apartment Section of the National Association of Real Estate Boards. The system includes models of all the legal forms needed and all the procedure involved in organizing, selling and operating an apartment structure where each tenant owns his own apartment. It is published in leather-bound book form by the Co-operative Apartment Association of Chicago.



## HOUSES FOR COLD CLIMATES

In a recent issue,\* we described the interesting piece of research work carried on in Trondhjem, Norway, by Professor Andr. Bugge, Architect and Professor at the Technical University of Norway, to determine the relative economy of various kinds of structural materials and types of wall construction for the purpose of producing warm and inexpensive dwellings.

Our review at that time was of his Report as published originally in the Norwegian language.

Recently an English edition of this Report has been made available, published in the form of a book of 80 pages, with numerous illustrations and under the title "Test Houses. The Results of Tests with Wall-constructions and Materials for Building Warm and Cheap Dwelling Houses", by Architect Andr. Bugge (Professor of the Norwegian Technical University) Published by F. Bruns, Bokhandels Forlag, Trondhjem, Norway.

Students of this subject of heat transmission through dwelling house walls who wish to study the question more closely in detail will find it well worth while to obtain a copy of this Report and study it in close detail.

## ZONING

### JUDGE-MADE LAW

### NEW JERSEY—OHIO

No more striking illustration of the limitations of our system of jurisprudence or of the infinite variabilities of the human equation can be found than in two decisions handed down recently by the courts of two different states—Ohio and New Jersey—within one month of each other, both having to do with the same subject but taking diametrically opposite views of it. If one court was right the other was clearly wrong.

If all that were involved in this error of judgment or lack of knowledge on the part of whichever court was wrong, were merely the injury resulting to one property owner whose interests might be affected by the decision, it might be a matter of small moment, but when one of these decisions has the effect of prac-

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\* *Housing Betterment*; May, 1923, page 221.

tically destroying the further protection of residence districts throughout an entire state, such decisions become fraught with the greatest possible concern for hundreds of thousands of people.

In both these decisions—the so-called *Nutley* case in New Jersey and the *Santangelo* case in Cincinnati—the same question was involved, viz. the validity of a provision of a Zoning ordinance which prohibits a store building in a residential district.

In the New Jersey case, the highest court in that state—the Court of Errors and Appeals—holds that any such attempt is unconstitutional and invalid and that it is not within the power of a community in the state of New Jersey, under existing law, to prohibit a store building in a residential district. The highest court in New Jersey therefore holds that the legislature may not confer upon a municipality in that state the right to develop that community in orderly fashion, by segregating in one district uses of property which are objectionable in other districts.

On this point the court says:

The narrow question, accordingly, which we are called upon to consider in the determination of this case is: Will the erection and user of a combined store and dwelling-house upon the lot of the respondent constitute a menace to the health or safety of the people of the town of Nutley, or to the general welfare of the municipality? That the mere erection of this building, regardless of the use to which it may afterwards be put, is likely to be injurious to the health or safety of the residents of the town is asserted, but, practically, not argued by counsel. And, as we see it, no well-grounded argument can be made in support of the assertion. The owner or the occupier of the store, after it is erected, might attempt to conduct therein a business which threatened public health or public safety; but the right of the municipality to restrain the carrying on of such a business (which may be conceded) is not involved in the present case. The bold assertion of counsel is that the mere presence of a store building in the so-called residence district of Nutley is in itself a menace to the public health and the public safety, notwithstanding that the business carried on therein will not constitute such a menace. Both common experience and common sense demonstrate the unsoundness of such an assertion.

On what theory can it be said that the restraining of the respondent from erecting a combined store and dwelling-house upon his property will tend to promote the general welfare of the community? It is probable that its presence there, without regard to its use would be objectionable to other property owners in the immediate neighborhood, who would prefer that business places should not be established in that part of town. But that is quite immaterial, for such property owners have not acquired the right to impose upon owners of other property in the vicinity any restrictions upon the lawful use thereof. The ordinary use of property is not authorized by general welfare clause of the statute to be prohibited, because repugnant to the sentiment or desires of a particular class residing in the immediate neighborhood thereof, but only because such use is detrimental to the interests of the public at large. In other words, the restriction authorized by this provision of the statute upon the untrammelled use of property for the promotion of the general welfare of the community must be such as will tend in some degree to prevent harm to the public generally or to promote the common good of the whole of the people of such community. That the prohibition by the town of Nutley, against the erection of such a building as is contemplated by the respondent upon the lot owned by him will not have any such effect seems to us to be manifest.

We conclude, therefore, that the ordinance under consideration, so far as it prevents the use of the respondent's property for the purpose to which he desires to put it, is not authorized by the statute under which it purports to have been adopted, and to that extent is null and void.

*(State ex rel. Ignaciunas v. Town of Nutley, N. J. Advance Reports, 852.)*

#### IN OHIO THEY THINK DIFFERENTLY

In refreshing contrast to this reactionary opinion, out of keeping with the times and non-responsive to progress, is the decision handed down by the Superior Court of Cincinnati in the case of *Santangelo v. the City of Cincinnati et al.*, (*Nisi Prius Reports New Series, 49-68*).

In that decision Judge Marx, not only shows a comprehensive grasp of the legal questions involved in this important subject but a thorough understanding of the social, civil and political elements involved in Zoning.

Much that he has to say on this subject is of such value that we are quoting it at length, as it should serve as an inspiration and example to persons interested in Zoning throughout the country.

It might just as well have been written in the *Nutley Case* by the judge in the highest court in New Jersey; for, the facts were practically identical. In each case a property owner desired to maintain a store building in a residential district, in which a comprehensive Zoning ordinance had prohibited such use of property.

After disposing of some of the other questions involved in the issue in the *Santangelo* case, Judge Marx addresses himself to the important question as to whether the Zoning ordinance is a valid and constitutional enactment. In considering the whole question with reference to the case at bar the court says, after describing the residential district in which it is proposed to create this store:

In this beautiful and private residential district the plaintiff claims a constitutional right to open a delicatessen, vegetable and grocery store, contrary to the provisions of the ordinance duly passed by the city council.

#### THE COURT NOT THE LEGISLATURE

On the subject of the relationship of the courts to acts of legislative bodies, and especially of courts of first instance, what Judge Marx has to say in this case should serve as an example and object lesson to other judges throughout the United States. On this point he says:

At the outset, it should be pointed out that no court, least of all a court of first instance, should declare invalid and unconstitutional, a law duly enacted by the legislative body of the city or state and inferentially approved by the people thereof since no referendum was filed, unless such law is so clearly and manifestly contrary to the constitution that rea-



sonable minds would have no doubt thereof. Every presumption must be indulged in favor of the validity and constitutionality of the law and the burden rests upon those who seek to set the same aside.

Judge Marx's decision contains one important reference and comment which offers a suggestion for all persons enacting Zoning ordinances in future; that is, the very great advantage of presenting to the local legislative body at the time the proposed Zoning ordinance is pending, a document of supporting evidence showing the relationship of the provisions of the ordinance to the promotion of public health, public safety and public welfare.

On this point, the decision says:

At the time said ordinance was adopted, the City Council had before it the history preceding such legislation, the reasons underlying the same and showing in intimate detail the relationship of the provisions of the ordinance to the promotion of the public health, public safety, public convenience, public prosperity and public welfare.

And he then refers to a document along these lines submitted to the City Council of Cincinnati by the United City Planning Committee composed of representatives of various civic, commercial and industrial organizations of the city all of whom he mentions by name.

The court adds very significantly that—

It is entirely proper in determining the constitutionality of legislation to consider the history thereof and opinions and articles by physicians, engineers, architects, housing experts, realtors, etc.

### THE VALUE OF A COMPREHENSIVE ORDINANCE

As illustrative of the value of a comprehensive Zoning ordinance as distinguished from a piecemeal or a carelessly drawn one, what the court has to say, in summing up his conclusions, is of very great value, and points the way for other communities to follow in preparing Zoning legislation. With reference to this phase of the subject, the court has the following to say:

From the history of the legislation under consideration it appears that the Cincinnati Zoning Ordinance is a carefully

thought out, scientific and comprehensive Zoning plan, covering the entire city, intended to promote the public health, safety, convenience, prosperity and welfare. It was prepared as a result of sixteen months of careful study by an advisory commission of experts who had available a large sum for doing all of the technical work required. The plan was based upon a survey and study of the entire city after consultation with the citizens and groups concerned; was approved by the city planning commission, including the mayor, the director of public service, and the park commissioners. It was then submitted to the city council and enacted into law. The ordinance upon its face appears to be clearly within the constitutional and charter power of the city to enact such legislation. As a whole, it appears to be a reasonable exercise of such power. The burden rests upon any person claiming it unreasonable to prove such unreasonableness by evidence.

In striking contrast to the view of the New Jersey court as to the desirability of a store of this character in a residential district, the court shows a clear realization of how objectionable a store of this kind is, from the point of view of the public welfare in a residential district. He says:

In the present case there is no evidence tending to prove that the particular provision prohibiting a delicatessen, vegetable and grocery store on the Melrose Avenue property, a residential street, is unreasonable. On the contrary, the evidence in the case and the inspection made by the court clearly indicates that this restriction is a reasonable limitation of the use of the property in the particular district involved and bears a reasonable and genuine relationship to the happiness, health and welfare of the immediate neighborhood.

#### SUPPORTING EVIDENCE ON ITS RELATION TO HEALTH

The Court then quotes *verbatim* detailed arguments submitted by Bleeker Marquette, Secretary of the Better Housing League in the statement submitted to the City Council, pointing out the reasons for excluding stores and similar businesses from residence districts, arguments and reasons all of which, we under-

stand, were before the New Jersey court in the *Nutley* case, but which that court brushed aside as of no moment.

What Judge Marx says with reference to the reasons for excluding stores from residence districts, seems to us the basis upon which such ordinances will be sustained by the courts of all our states in the future, as in the interest of the public *welfare*, irrespective of questions of health or safety. On this point the court has the following to say:

A consideration of such evidence leads the court to the conclusion that the setting aside of residential areas, free from the blighting influence of business is a necessary and desirable exercise of the police power. The inhabitants of a great city are entitled to areas where they can escape from the noises, dust, odor, congestion and turmoil of business districts. The small and large property owner is entitled to be protected from the intrusion of undesirable businesses and the resulting depreciation in value of his property.

The decision also contains a most interesting and discriminating appreciation of what a Zoning ordinance really is, viz., that it is nothing more than a Building Code differentiated with respect to conditions which prevail in different districts, and applied reasonably and scientifically to those conditions. This is the first time that we have found this phase of Zoning discussed in any court decision, and it seems to us that it offers a very valuable basis of argument for the support of Zoning ordinances in future cases.

Discussing the claim made in this case that it is an undue restriction upon the use of private property, the court says the following:

Indeed, the Building Code as it stood prior to the Zoning law is crowded with restrictions upon the use of property which have never been questioned. Certainly the fact that all these restrictions upon the height, bulk, lot occupancy, set back and use are gathered into one comprehensive and scientifically designed plan, does not make unreasonable what was reasonable when it stood alone. The contrary is true. The division of the city into various areas and the protection of those areas against non-conforming uses and the

uniform regulations adopted with reference to all property within a given area, all are evidence of a more reasonable rather than a less reasonable regulation of property.

Summing up his analysis of the issues involved in this case, Judge Marx says:

Such legislation is clearly constitutional and will promote the health, happiness, growth and prosperity of the entire city.

We are not informed whether this case is to be carried up on appeal but we should hope it might be. With this splendid decision of the lower court it would seem as if an excellent basis for an adjudication of this important phase of Zoning were afforded the people of the state of Ohio.

## THE PLIGHT OF NEW JERSEY

Following the decision of the highest court, the Court of Errors and Appeals—in the so-called “Nutley” case, (*State, ex rel, Ignaciunas v. Town of Nutley, New Jersey Advance Reports* 852) holding that it is not within the power of the Zoning ordinance to prohibit a store in a residential district, there have been a flood of decisions of the courts of that state declaring void various provisions of Zoning laws in different communities throughout New Jersey, and basing such decisions upon the opinion of the highest court in the Nutley case.

Among the decisions thus handed down may be noted the following:

In Jersey City (*Plaza Apartment Hotel Corporation v. Commissioners of Jersey City, New Jersey Supreme Court November Term 1923, No. 8763*), the authorities denied permission for the alteration of a building for store purposes in a residential district as the Zoning ordinance forbade it. The Court set aside this action and issued a writ of mandamus, basing its decision on the Nutley case.

In the City of Paterson (*H. & R. Realty Company v. John Quigley, New Jersey Supreme Court 230, November Term 1923, 8765*), the Building Inspector refused a permit for the alteration of a dwelling into a store because of the fact that it was located



in a district established as residential under the Paterson Zoning ordinance. The Court reversed the action of the local authorities and issued a peremptory mandamus to issue a permit, basing its decision on the Nutley case. It gave leave to prepare pleadings for appeal to the higher court if desired.

The City of Jersey City (*Huppert v. Hague, Supreme Court of New Jersey, May 7, 1924, N. J. Advance Reports 348*) refused a permit for the conversion of certain garages into stores, on the ground that the Zoning ordinance restricted the land in question to residential purposes. The Supreme Court reversed the action of the local authorities and granted a writ of mandamus, basing its decision on the Nutley case.

In the Township of Lyndhurst (*King v. Favier, Supreme Court of New Jersey, May 10, 1924 N. J. Advance Reports 358*) the local authorities refused a permit for the conversion of a building into store purposes in a residential district, contrary to the Zoning ordinance of the Township of Lyndhurst. In this case also the Supreme Court granted a writ of mandamus that a permit issue, basing its decision on the Nutley case.

The City of Passaic (*R. & B. Realty & Construction Co. v. Jelleme, Supreme Court of New Jersey, May 7, 1924, N. J. Advance Reports 356*) refused a permit for the erection of three two-family houses in the city of Passaic on the ground that two-family houses were forbidden by the Zoning Ordinance in the district in question, which was limited to private residences.

## TWO FAMILY HOUSES CANNOT BE BARRED

The Court here, although the question at issue was a totally different one, issued a writ of mandamus basing its decision upon the Nutley case—a most extraordinary action to take in view of the fact that the question of the legality of the Zoning ordinance prohibiting two-family dwellings was not the issue involved in the Nutley case, but a very distinct issue viz., as to whether a store building was injurious to the health, safety or general welfare.

In Ridgefield (*White v. Bower, Supreme Court of New Jersey, May 7, 1924, N. J. Advance Reports 357*) a permit was denied for the erection of a frame office building in a section of Ridgefield, on the ground that the Zoning ordinance prohibited in that district any use other than one-family dwellings. The court in

this case also granted a mandamus, basing its decision on the Nutley case, although this question was not involved in the Nutley case.

Other decisions adverse to Zoning ordinances handed down by the Courts of New Jersey since the Nutley case, and undoubtedly to a very large extent influenced by that decision, although not based directly upon that decision, may be cited as follows:

In Jersey City (*G. M. S. Holding Corporation v. Commissioners of Jersey City, New Jersey Supreme Court, Nov. Term, 1923*) the local officials refused a permit for a garage in a business section. On mandamus, the Supreme Court held that the Zoning ordinance did not exclude this class of building and granted a mandamus.

In another case in Jersey City (*Robert Johnston and Francis Stanlon v. Commissioners of Jersey City, N. J. Supreme Court, No. 227, November Term, 1923*) the city officials refused a permit for the building of a garage containing more than five cars in a district in which public garages of that character were prohibited by the Zoning ordinance. In this case, the Court held that the ordinance was valid and upheld the city authorities in its refusal to issue a building permit.

#### OPPRESSION STOPPED BY THE COURTS

A case in Long Branch (*Leo Stein v. City of Long Branch, New Jersey Supreme Court No. 211, November Term 1923*) illustrates the dangers incurred in Zoning where city officials and citizens seek to use Zoning as a means of accomplishing results that Zoning was never intended to accomplish. In such cases, the courts rightly refuse to uphold such action.

In this case the action of the local officials seems particularly flagrant and it was quite appropriate that it should be set aside by the courts. Here, the owner of a certain piece of land applied to the Building Inspector for a permit to erect six bungalows. The Building Inspector, instead of deciding the question referred the plans to the Zoning Committee, and the latter refused the application; and then about a week later the City passed a Zoning ordinance, providing that in that section of the city all buildings should be erected on a single lot of land 150 feet front by 250 feet deep, should be  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories high and cost not less than \$15,000 and that no bungalows should be erected.

This high-handed proceeding quite violative of the constitutional rights of the property owner and entirely unauthorized by any statute was rightly set aside by the Supreme Court. It held that the provisions in the Zoning ordinance in question were unreasonable and unconstitutional.

The City of Elizabeth (*R. J. Parker et al v. Edward A. Brennan, Building Inspector of Elizabeth, New Jersey Supreme Court 217, February Term 1924*) sought to prevent a property owner from enclosing a sun porch of his existing residence on the ground that it violated the city Zoning ordinance. The court, without rendering an opinion, reversed the action of the city official, basing its decision on the Nutley case, which does not seem to have any bearing at all upon the issue involved.

### AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

An interesting case arose in the City of Rutherford, where the issues involved seem to have ranged from the reasonableness of the determination by the local authorities of the proper districts for business and residential purposes, to a consideration of seeking to accomplish aesthetic improvement by means of a Zoning ordinance.

In this case (*Cooper Lumber Company v. John Dammers, Building Inspector of Rutherford, New Jersey Supreme Court, February Term 1924, 125 Atlantic Reporter, 325*), the owner of a tract of land who wished to use it as a lumber yard was denied that privilege by the local authorities, on the ground that the Zoning ordinance prohibited the use of this property for use other than residential purposes, as it was located in a district established as residential by the ordinance in question.

The court held that the local governing body had not given that reasonable consideration to the character of the district, its peculiar suitability for particular uses and the direction of building development in accordance with a well considered plan, required by the statute; that the district in question was essentially industrial in its present character and probable future use, and that the desired use of the property was not detrimental to the public, health, safety or general welfare and that the constitutional rights of private property had been invaded in this case, basing his opinion on the Nutley decision.

The court furthermore states that the purpose of placing the property in question in a residential district was to beautify that portion of the bank of the Passaic River and rightly says that aesthetic considerations are not a matter of necessity which justifies the exercise of the police power to take private property without compensation.

A case in Newark (*State ex rel. Plymouth Co. v. Bigelow*, Supreme Court of New Jersey, July 22, 1924, N. J. Advance Reports 711) seems to involve the reasonableness of the local authorities in establishing the various districts under their Zoning ordinance; the court holding that this action had not been reasonable with proper relation to, the appropriate uses to which the various districts might be put. On this point the court has the following to say:

Upon what sound practical theory one of the leading business arteries of a populous city may be severed and the undeveloped severed part restricted to residential use, and thereby barring the street to further business extension and development is beyond the power of plain sense to discover. We think this attempted classification of South Orange Avenue is purely arbitrary.

#### PUBLIC GARAGES NOT LIKED BY THE COURT

The City of East Orange (*Hench v. City of East Orange*, Supreme Court of New Jersey, June 14, 1924, N. J. Advance Reports 510) denied a permit for the construction of two public automobile garages containing 16 automobiles in a district established as residential by the Zoning ordinance and in which public garages containing that number of cars are prohibited. The Supreme Court in its decision holds that the ordinance in question is valid and cites other decisions of the same court to the effect that the erection and management of a garage with all its incidental dangers and inconvenience to adjoining property, and public travel, are manifestly matters properly cognizable by the municipal governing body, as a subject for regulation in the public interest under the police power expressly conferred, as in this instance, or reasonably implied *ex necessitate* in aid of the general welfare against dangers recognized and obvious, to persons and property."



## THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE APARTMENT HOUSE

Another case in which the New Jersey Courts have swept aside Zoning ordinances is found in a recent decision of the Supreme Court (*Jersey Land Company v. John D. Scott, Building Inspector of East Orange*). In this case it was sought to erect a 4-story apartment house with accommodations for 24 families in a residential district in which apartment houses were prohibited by the Zoning ordinance. The court reversed the action of the local authorities and issued a mandamus granting the permission, basing its decision upon the Nutley case. The Court added on this moot question of the apartment house, the following:

An apartment house is a mode of habitation specially recognized by the laws of the state as a necessary method of meeting the social congestion of our cities. It is a method of supplying in compact form accommodations to numbers of families under a common roof.

Such structures are not only recognized, but seem to have become of necessity a part of our economic and domestic life. They are found in large numbers in all our larger cities, and afford convenient access to workers and business men in such congested centres, who otherwise probably could not be adequately supplied with the conveniences of modern life. The building contemplated here is four stories. The ordinance in question forbidding the construction of such a building seems to be wholly unnecessary, within the comprehension of the statute, for the public safety, public health, or the general welfare in this particular community. That its presence may not recommend it to other residents in the immediate neighborhood presents no basis for regarding the erection of the building as opposed to the general welfare. The height of the building cannot in any sense be regarded as endangering the public safety, nor can it be reasonably contended that the health of the community could be injuriously affected thereby.

Similar action was taken by the same court in another East Orange case (*Edward M. Handy v. John D. Scott, Inspector of Buildings, East Orange*).

A novel issue was raised in another New Jersey case in South Orange (*Charles H. Ingersoll v. Ira T. Redfern, Building Inspector of South Orange*). In this instance a permit was sought for the erection of a 3-story apartment house containing 17 families, located in a private residence district in South Orange. The

permit in question was denied by the Building Inspector on the ground that it violated the Zoning ordinance of the Town.

From this decision the owner appealed to the court. When the case was before the court, the Inspector of Buildings, in addition to alleging that the proposed building, was contrary to the Zoning ordinance also contended that the fire facilities of the town were not ample to protect the lives of so many families in any one building within its limits, and stated that until the enactment of a Zoning ordinance it had not been possible, except through private restrictions in deeds, to limit the number of families in apartment buildings. Therefore, several of them had been built in this section.

The court was so much impressed with this new point that it granted an alternative writ of mandamus requiring the Building Inspector to show cause at a later date why it should not be made permanent, pointing out that the new argument involved a question which had not been passed upon by the appellate courts of the state and for this reason, it required further consideration.

## WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT IT?

As to what the outcome of the New Jersey situation is to be there can be little doubt. There is an aroused, militant, organized public sentiment throughout most of the communities of that state for the sustaining by the courts of reasonable Zoning regulations; and it is hardly likely that where the people of a state are as determined as the people of New Jersey are, for the protection of their rights, that they will not secure them. We have no hesitation in saying that if the judges of the courts of New Jersey continue to refuse to grant to the citizens of New Jersey, the protection which the law affords citizens in other states under similar circumstances, that the citizens will make short work at the polls of any judicial candidates who may take that kind of a position.

Following the decision in the Nutley case, a conference was organized last June in Newark at which representatives of Chambers of Commerce and various civic organizations throughout the state participated. In connection with that conference a letter was presented from Edward M. Bassett, the well known Zoning authority outlining his ideas of the procedure that should be followed in future in dealing with the situation in New Jersey.

## BASSETT POINTS THE WAY

What Mr. Bassett suggested was that immediate steps should be taken to make a new start under the new Zoning Enabling Act passed at the 1924 session of the legislature. Mr. Bassett suggested that each municipality throughout the state should take steps to place its Zoning ordinance under the Enabling Act; and that the surest way of doing this was to re-pass the ordinance with such changes as would comply with the requirements of the new Act, taking care to observe the preliminaries required under that statute; that, when this has been done, a Board of Adjustment should be created under the provisions of the new Enabling Act and ordinance, and that in any case that might be brought attacking the constitutionality of a Zoning ordinance thus adopted the City Attorney should be urged to refer the litigant in the first case to such Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Bassett expressed the view that if the courts would begin this technic they would save much trouble in being required to pass upon the constitutionality of Zoning in numerous instances that will arise—instances of individual hardship which can be adjusted by local boards of adjustment and which, in his opinion, appropriately need not occupy the attention of the court. In this connection he pointed out that in New York City through a period of 8 years no applicant for a permit has been able to attack the constitutionality of the Zoning ordinance because he is compelled to go to the Board of Appeals, and then review the decision of that Board by *certiorari*.

## THE TAX ANALOGY

Mr. Bassett pointed out that this is not a novel practice but is a practice that has been in common use for many years in connection with tax matters, not only in New York but in New Jersey as well. He says:

If the tax assessments in New Jersey were fixed by the municipal legislature as a legislative act, a grossly unfair assessment could be attacked by mandamus and the court would declare it unconstitutional and void. Then the taxpayer would pay no tax that year. This would upset the whole system of taxation. Instead of this, the statute provides that an administrative board, usually

called the board of assessment, can fix assessments for taxation subject to the rule of fair value between a willing buyer and a willing seller, an aggrieved person can obtain a court review if he desires, and thereupon the court instead of nullifying the assessment can adjust it so that the taxpayer will be treated reasonably and will still pay his tax of that year.

Mr. Bassett adds that this is practically the method of procedure that is now made possible in New Jersey in Zoning matters by the new Zoning Enabling Act, and rightly says:

There is no reason why municipalities in New Jersey should not utilize this new avenue of the board of adjustment so as to bring about the use of the writ of certiorari instead of mandamus. The imperfect and non-understandable provisions regarding the powers of the board of adjustment under the old laws should be pointed out to the courts in contrast with the new. In my opinion courts will give serious attention to the new avenue thus pointed out by the clear statement of the powers of the board of adjustment in the new Zoning Enabling Act, and there is a fair chance that the courts will follow this avenue. It is a better lead in my opinion than a constitutional amendment.

W. D. Ennis, Vice President of the Technical Advisory Corporation of New York which has had much to do with the preparation of Zoning ordinances for many New Jersey communities and a resident of New Jersey himself, has recently issued a memorandum as to suggested procedure to be followed by New Jersey communities in the light of the decision of the court in the Nutley case.

#### W. D. ENNIS ADVISES

In this memorandum Mr. Ennis points out the possibilities of enacting new ordinances under the authority of the new 1924 enabling act, based as it is closely upon the Standard Zoning Enabling Act of the U. S. Department of Commerce and states that it is not strange that there should have been so much litigation, when one considers that over 65 communities at the time of making the last count had Zoning ordinances, and few of them were provided with boards of adjustment.

He states that until recently no court decision in New Jersey had called into question any of the fundamentals in Zoning, but points out that this statement is no longer true, in view of the de-



cision in the "Nutley case", which attacks one of the fundamentals of Zoning; and which, if sound, will somewhat embarrass every community in formulating a building zone ordinance. He adds:

The Nutley decision is important because it differs from other New Jersey decisions in not relating to any impropriety of mapping or bad judgment in districting, but to the fundamental question of whether business and residential uses of land may be separated. New Jersey, speaking through its highest court, says that such separation cannot be justified. Speaking through their highest courts, the States of California, Massachusetts, Ohio, Minnesota, Iowa and Kansas have taken the exactly opposite view: and the Supreme Court of the United States in more than one instance, has also rendered decisions with which the Nutley decision is not in harmony.

### WHAT IS STILL LEFT

Respecting the question of a possible constitutional amendment, Mr. Ennis points out that this is the method by which Massachusetts put Zoning on a stable footing.

Mr. Ennis gets what cold comfort he can out of the situation by pointing out all the things that may still be done under Zoning laws in New Jersey, notwithstanding the adverse decision of the highest court in the Nutley case. He says:

But, after all, the complexities and doubtful questions arising in any attempt to conform with the law as expressed in this decision should not loom up too large in the mind of any citizen. They are mere details. Zoning does a great deal more than to separate stores from residences, and the right to do these other things has not been attacked. A city may still exclude objectionable industries. It may certainly keep factories (and particularly the insidious and dangerous sweatshop type) outside of residence districts and even out of business districts. Back yard commercial and industrial establishments can be discouraged. Adequately lighted and ventilated rooms and proper dimensions for yards and courts can be exacted. Overcrowding can be put under measurable control. The apartment house can be regulated as to its location in the city, position on the lot and general bulk and construction. Rear dwellings can be controlled. Heights of buildings on narrow streets may be appropriately limited and the public garage may be regulated in all districts. Set back building lines are as lawful as they ever were. Adequate side yards, or in their absence, equivalent regulations, may be provided on a suitable scale for the various residence districts.

In general, the benefits of Zoning in reducing fire risk, discouraging congestion and promoting realty values may be realized not as fully, it is true, as if the store could be excluded from the residence district; but still in large measure.

Mr. Ennis sums up his memorandum by saying that those remaining cities in the state which have not yet enacted Zoning ordinances should frame them in strict accordance with the new enabling act of 1924 and with the decision in the Nutley case. Then if, as seems unquestionable, subsequent legal decisions should show a progressive tendency and lead to an enlarged view of what can properly be done under the police power of the community, the ordinances should be progressively amended from time to time in harmony with such decisions.

He very wisely says that things that they may be able to do later will be relatively easy to accomplish when once the general idea of Zoning shall be made familiar to the people, and a part of the current administration of the cities' affairs.

### THE PEOPLE AROUSED

That the people are keenly alive to the situation is evidenced by the report of a meeting called by the Borough Council of Haworth a few weeks ago, at which meeting a state-wide committee was appointed for the purpose of making a popular protest against the recent court decisions and for the enactment of legislation necessary to sustain the Zoning laws now in effect.

A communication has been sent out by the public officials of Haworth to mayors of other communities throughout the state, as well as to representatives of civic organizations calling attention to the situation and saying in part the following:

Alarm has been occasioned by recent decisions of the higher courts which threaten to nullify the Zoning ordinances throughout the state.

We firmly believe that the residents of the various communities should be encouraged in the establishment of attractive homes protected from undesirable surroundings and that certain localities in each community may be designated where homes and money invested will receive full protection by law.

We believe that the desire of the people for better and more attractive homes is of national importance and should not be suppressed, but should be encouraged by future legislation.

It is urgently requested that you place this subject before your local authorities to the end that a similar resolution be adopted and a committee appointed to cooperate with a General State Committee to be created at an early date.

The State Federation of Women's Clubs of New Jersey has been enlisted in the cause, in addition to Chambers of Commerce throughout the state, who for a long time have been valiant supporters of the cause of Zoning which would seem to indicate that New Jersey has become a state aroused.

We cannot doubt that its militant citizenship will succeed in curing the existing situation.

## STORES IN RESIDENCE DISTRICTS IN BALTIMORE

Baltimore is now at the stage of attempting to find out whether its recently enacted Zoning ordinance will stand the test in the courts or not. We referred in our May issue to the decision of Judge Heusler of the Superior Court in sustaining that provision of the Baltimore Zoning law which excludes stores from residential districts, the case involving a tailoring establishment.

As was anticipated, this case was carried up on appeal to the higher courts. The Court of Appeals, however, instead of giving a final decision, ordered a rehearing in the case and requested information on the following five points:

1. The amount of discretion which by Section 22-F of the Zoning Ordinance is vested in the Board of Zoning Appeals, when, as the ordinance says, "there are practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships in the way of carrying out the letter of this ordinance and the maps." Is there anything in the restriction imposed by the ordinance which is final and beyond the discretion of the Board of Appeals?

2. Would that section permit discrimination between uses of the same general description but with differences in condition under which the work is carried on in one place and in another? Or must all similar uses be treated indistinguishably in a class in the same district?

3. Is or is not the power given by the ordinance to the Board of Zoning Appeals too arbitrary and unlimited to be constitutional?

4. On the provision for appeals to the Baltimore City Court—can the municipal corporation without legislative authority confer a new

special jurisdiction upon a state court and define its procedure, as this ordinance undertakes to do?

5. If the provision for appeal to the Baltimore City Court should not be valid, what if any effect would its validity have on the validity of the remainder? Is such an appeal necessary to the ordinance?

It is expected that a re-argument of this case will be had in the near future, at which time it will be interesting to see whether the State of Maryland will range itself on the side of New York, Ohio, Massachusetts, Wisconsin and Minnesota which hold that stores can be excluded from residential districts, or on the side of New Jersey which holds that they can not. (*Goldman vs. Crowther, Building Inspector of Baltimore.*)

## APARTMENTS MAY BE PROHIBITED IN RESIDENCE DISTRICTS IN YOUNGSTOWN

Following the precedent established by the village of East Cleveland in barring apartment houses from private residential districts established under the Zoning ordinance, the Court of Common Pleas of Mahoning County, in which the City of Youngstown is located, has recently held that a Zoning ordinance which prohibits the building of apartment houses in private residence districts is valid, and a proper exercise of the police power in the interest of public welfare.

In the case of *Kahn Brothers Co. v. City of Youngstown et al* (*Ohio Law Reporter Vol. 22, No. 13, Page 31*) Judge Lyon, of the Court of Common Pleas holds that—

Contrary to first impression, the court finds that the erection of an apartment house in the locality named will be a serious detriment to the neighborhood, in that it will increase the fire hazard, and will be creative of noises from autos, taxis, milk wagons, drays, etc., in a locality where peace and quiet now prevail; that it will obstruct light and air; that sooner or later it will bring with it the immoralities which always attend the building of such structures; that it will increase the danger arising from the spread of disease; that obnoxious gases, soot and smoke will be thrown off by such a building; that it will unquestionably depreciate the value of real estate in that vicinity; and that the public health, safety, convenience, morals, prosperity, tranquillity and general welfare afford ground for denying the injunction asked.



This scholarly and thoughtful opinion is one which holds much of interest for all students of Zoning ; for, the court has gone into the authorities cited on both sides evidently with very great care.

The court's attitude with reference to not substituting the court's opinion for that of the legislative body responsible for the enactment of the ordinance, is what all decisions of this kind should be. On this point, the court has the following to say :

Courts must presume that care, study and thought had been exercised by the legislative body that brings into being the ordinance in question : that there is some necessity for the enactment ; that the framers had in mind the constitutional limitation upon the enactment and judicial precedent ; \* \* \*

When the dominant aim of the ordinance is founded upon those powers then the ordinance is valid ; otherwise if its substance relates purely to the aesthetic, it comes within the constitutional inhibition, and is void.

Further, Council is chosen by the people, and when Council has spoken by legislative act, to wit, by ordinance, their enactment is the voice of the people, unless by referendum or court decision, the legislation is annulled, or held unconstitutional. There was no referendum on this ordinance. Therefore, the people speaking through their legally constituted representatives have said in this enactment that an apartment house is one structure, in the part of the city designated by this ordinance, that may be prohibited by police power, in that it increases fire hazards ; it is creative of noises that would not have existed in that neighborhood, by autos, taxies, milk wagons, coal wagons, drays, etc., where peace and quiet had formerly prevailed upon the streets and in the neighborhood ; that it limits light and air, and it brings with it certain immoralities sooner or later that always attend such structures ; there is always the danger of the spread of disease due to the number of inhabitants ; obnoxious gases, soot and smoke generally accompany the construction of a large apartment house, and unquestionably the erection of one would lessen the value of real estate in the immediate vicinity. Now why ? It is not sentiment, it is not fancy, it is not the aesthetic, but rather the depreciation of real estate value in the immediate vicinity or community where the apartment is to be built ; the public health, safety, general welfare, public con-

venience, morals, public interest in general, prosperity and tranquillity of the community, peace and quietness.

Police power is founded on general necessity and only public necessity can justify its existence. Each member of a community is presumed to be benefited by that which promotes the general welfare.

### WHEN IS A FAMILY NOT A FAMILY?

Another instance of an attempt by city authorities to exceed their legal powers and to prohibit certain uses of property, without either legal or practical basis for such action, was found in a case recently decided in New York state. (*City of Syracuse v. Snow et al, Supreme Court Onondaga County, 205 New York, 785.*)

In this case, the City Planning Commission of the city of Syracuse, sought to prohibit the maintenance of a Sorority House in connection with Syracuse University, in a residential district.

The court in its decision, after pointing out that under the definition of a family as given in the Zoning ordinance, the occupants of the Sorority House exactly constituted such a family, and that therefore they were quite within their power in maintaining a place of residence in a residential district, points out significantly that there is no power vested in the City Planning Commission of Syracuse with respect to the occupancy of existing buildings unless the location of such a building is changed or the building or structure is altered, and that the general broad power "to regulate, restrict and prohibit the location of business, trades or industry" does not apply to the occupancy of a house for such purposes. That it cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be held to be a business, nor could the occupants be said to be carrying on a trade or promoting an industry.

The court was very careful not to pass upon the validity of the Zoning ordinance in its entirety, but limited its decision and its remarks to the particular points involved in this case.

It is another object lesson of the danger, first of not having a proper enabling act and second of municipal authorities exceeding the powers conferred upon them by such. There is only one course for such authorities to pursue and that is to absolutely limit themselves to what the law intended and what the law permits. If a situation develops by which they need larger powers, they should go to the legislature and obtain such powers before attempting to use them.

## A BOARD OF APPEALS CAUGHT NAPPING

An interesting illustration of the wisdom and necessity of Boards of Appeals walking the straight and narrow path in enforcing Zoning ordinances and adhering strictly to the legal powers granted them under the statutes, is evidenced by a case that recently arose in the New York courts (*People ex rel. Smith et al v. Walsh et al*, *New York Law Journal* July 12, 1924, page 1335, *Supreme Court, Special Term Part 1*).

In this case it appeared that the Board of Appeals granted permission for the erection of a garage for more than 5 cars in a business district. The neighbors who objected to the establishment of the garage in this neighborhood took the case up on appeal to the Supreme Court.

In an interesting and searching opinion handed down upon this application Mr. Justice Benedict rightly says that the Board of Appeals had authority to proceed under Section 20 of the Zoning Resolution, and if it found that the strict enforcement of the Resolution entailed practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, to vary the provisions thereof in harmony with its general purposes and intent, to promote public health, safety and general welfare, and to do substantial justice.

The Court very appropriately says:

If the Board had made such a determination, then the court, in reviewing its decision, would be limited to the inquiry whether it had jurisdiction, and, if so, whether it abused its discretion.

The court adds:

However, the return does not show that the Board made any such determination. Neither its resolution nor the report of the Committee which examined the premises so recites.

Consequently, after reviewing the facts a little further, the court holds that the matter is now before the court on the merits, and adds:

Considering the case on the merits, the principal question, as it seems to me, is whether another large garage is needed in the locality in question, which is a constricted neighborhood, lying between Prospect Park and Greenwood Cemetery, largely residential in character.

The court points out that no testimony was taken before the Board as to the necessity of such a large garage in this particular location, and states that the court is loath to determine a question of this importance on technical rules of pleading. He thereupon decides that he will send the case to a referee to take evidence on the issues presented by the petition, and to render his opinion thereon to the court.

Thus the Board of Appeals, through its own slipshod method of hearing a case, has lost jurisdiction over it, and brought a case squarely before the court, when the matter would have been left entirely in the judicial discretion of the Board, if the latter had proceeded in proper fashion. This should be a warning to Boards of Appeals throughout the country to observe strictly the letter of the law, and work closely within the powers conferred upon them by statute.

## ORDERLY PROCEDURE

Another instance of the tendency of the courts to insist upon local authorities proceeding according to law and within the well defined limits of the powers granted to them by the legislature in connection with Zoning ordinances, is to be found in a case recently decided by the Appellate Division of the Fourth Department of the Supreme Court of New York, in the case of *Welch et al v. City of Niagara Falls et al*, (205 N. Y. 454).

In this instance an attempt was made by the legislative body of the city of Niagara Falls to prohibit the maintenance of a wholesale and retail coal business in a certain portion of the city, through the enactment of an amendment to the general ordinances of the city to that effect.

In the case under review the Appellate Division points out significantly that a coal business, while it may unquestionably give rise to noise and dust and be objectionable to neighbors, cannot be classed as a nuisance and adds :

The exclusion of this particular business from a considerable district of a city can only be justified as an exercise of the Zoning power granted to cities by paragraph 25 of section 20 of the General City Law, added by Chapter 483 of the Laws of 1917.

The court further points out that the proceedings were not carried out under the provisions of law constituting the Zoning



power; that if they had been, this ordinance would have been referred to the Advisory Board on Zoning; and that in view of the prohibition in the charter against the City Council acting upon any matter which must be referred to the Advisory Board without first receiving such Board's report, this particular ordinance is invalid.

This is another interesting illustration of the tendency of the courts to sustain Zoning ordinances, properly enacted, and to refuse to countenance illegal action on the part of the local authorities. It should be a warning to all local authorities in attempting to enforce Zoning regulations.

## THE PROPER USE OF ZONING LAWS

An illustration of the way in which Zoning laws can be distorted by public officials seeking to prevent uses, for which there is no warrant in law, is found in a recent case in New York, where the authorities sought to prevent the owner of a lot from removing sand from it, the lot being located in a residential district. The claim was made that the digging of sand in the lot in question was using the lot for business purposes—a use which was prohibited in a residence district under the Zoning Resolution.

The New York Supreme Court at Special Term made short shrift of this contention and held that the use in question was temporary, and that even if the Zoning Resolution had sought to prevent such a use, that, in the opinion of the court, it would have been invalid; that sand is a valuable property and that the owner of land upon which there is sand or other valuable property cannot constitutionally be prevented from severing and selling it. No authorities on the question were cited by either party or discovered by the court and the motion for the injunction on behalf of the city authorities to prevent the excavation of the sand was denied. (*City of New York v. Holzman*, *N. Y. Law Journal*, August 7, 1924, page 1523.)

## ZONING DOING THE SPLIT

Zoning experts have realized for some time that the chief danger which the cause of Zoning has to contend with in this country is too great popularity, and the temptation that exists in many communities for persons unfamiliar with the legal difficulties

involved, to make Zoning do things which it was never intended to do.

An interesting case in point is to be found in the decision of the New York courts in the case of *People ex rel. Frax Realty Co., Inc. v. Kleinert*, Supreme Court, Special Term, Part 1, Kings County (*New York Law Journal*, July 10, 1924, page 1316).

In this instance the Zoning ordinance prohibited the building of a garage for more than 5 cars within 200 feet of any hospital maintained as a charitable institution. The enforcing officials sought to give a distorted meaning to the word "hospital" by holding that an institution for old people was a hospital, within the meaning of the Zoning ordinance; and that, therefore, a garage for more than 5 cars might not be erected within 200 feet of the institution in question.

It is such attempts on the part of public officials and others to exceed the powers granted them under Zoning laws that is likely to bring Zoning not only into disrepute but to bring it in grief to the ground.

The court very rightly in rendering its decision in this case pointed out that a home for the aged is in no sense a hospital in the ordinary use of the term, and that giving this distorted meaning to language that has a well accepted meaning was entirely inappropriate. On this point it says:

The error of giving a forced or strained construction to common words when used in statutes is forcibly illustrated by the instant case. Had the relator supposed that by any philological process a home for the aged could be regarded as a hospital he would not of course have attempted to erect a garage in such close proximity to such a home, would not have stated in his application that there was no hospital within 200 feet and would not have expended some \$8,000 in carrying on the work.

## ZONING ACCORDING TO LAW

An interesting example of the way in which the courts of the different states react to Zoning legislation is to be found in a decision handed down in New York not long ago, in the case of *Harris vs. Village of Dobbs Ferry*, Appellate Division, Supreme Court Second Department, (*N. Y. Law Journal*, April 18, 1924 page 268).

In this case, the village of Dobbs Ferry enacted an ordinance prohibiting certain uses in a certain part of the village. A prop-

erty owner whose property was affected contested the legality of the ordinance on the ground that it did not comply with the Zoning Enabling law for villages of New York state, which requires that the village shall be divided into districts and that the regulations for each district shall be in accordance with a well-considered plan.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court held with the plaintiff in this case and in their decision pointed out that the legislature did not intend that such restrictions on the property owners' rights should be haphazard, selecting one street or another from time to time. But that the regulation must be in accordance with a well-considered plan and "If the trustees desire to accomplish the objects recited in the preamble to their resolution the method is pointed out in the statute. It is best to adhere to the statutory provisions in interfering with the property owners' rights."

## PROTECTING RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

A recent instance of the tendency of the Courts to preserve to occupants of residential districts the quiet enjoyment of their homes free from invasion, is to be found in a recent decision of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in the case of *Edmunds et al vs. Duff et al* in which an attempt to establish an amusement park of the usual type—or perhaps in this case a little higher grade than the usual type—was violently opposed by the residents of the district who claimed that the park in question would be a nuisance and would interfere with the enjoyment of their homes and would depreciate property.

In an elaborate opinion handed down by the court after a careful examination of all the questions involved, the highest court sustained the decision of the lower court, in holding that the proposed amusement park would be a nuisance and prohibiting its maintenance. In the lower court complaints were filed from over 140 different residents in the neighborhood and the printed record covered more than 1500 pages. The court below after an elaborate review of the testimony concluded that the statements made were sustained by the evidence, and that the establishment and operation of the proposed amusement place would be a nuisance to the residents of the neighborhood, and accordingly

granted an injunction restraining the defendants from erecting and operating the park as had been proposed.

What the court has to say as to the inherent right of persons to enjoy the occupation of their homes, free from noise and interference has a most important bearing on the validity of Zoning ordinances, especially those Zoning ordinances which seek to establish private residence districts in various cities, and which have been the subject of considerable doubt and of varying decisions by the courts.

On this point the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has the following to say:

No man has a right to take from another the enjoyment of the reasonable and essential comforts of life and, consequently, cannot commit acts on his own premises calculated to interfere with the reasonable enjoyment by others of their homes. Even music, however elevating and enjoyable at times, and depending, of course, on its character, may be continued so long as to become an annoyance to those compelled to remain in the immediate vicinity.

Thus a body of substantial opinion is being built up by the courts sustaining the fundamental principles of Zoning laws that differentiate residential districts and exclude apartment houses from private residence districts, as well as the much mooted store or shop.

## NUISANCES AND ZONING

Two decisions handed down recently, while not involving the validity of Zoning ordinances, have a bearing upon Zoning, in sustaining ordinances to protect residential districts from undesirable invasion. One of these is the case of *Tureman et al v. Ketterlin et al*, (263 *Southwestern Reporter*, 202).

In this case, the Missouri Supreme Court sustained the validity of an ordinance prohibiting the maintenance of an undertaker's establishment in a residential district. The court held that while an undertaking establishment is not a nuisance *per se*, the maintenance of such an establishment in a residence district of a city constitutes a private nuisance. This would seem to be a valuable precedent for the sustaining of Zoning ordinances that prohibit stores and similar objectionable uses in residential districts.



Another case of a somewhat similar nature was decided recently in Tennessee, in the case of *City of Memphis vs. Gianotti*. This case involved the validity of an ordinance adopted by the city of Memphis, making it a misdemeanor to maintain a junk shop or junk yard in a block in which two-thirds of the total number of buildings on both sides of the street are used exclusively for residential purposes.

The owner of the junk yard was found guilty by the lower court and fined \$50. He thereupon appealed his case to the Circuit Court, which reversed the verdict of the lower court. An appeal was then taken to the Supreme Court of the State, which in an interesting opinion, held that the ordinance was a valid, legal and enforceable ordinance of the city of Memphis. This decision should be further cumulative argument in support of the attempt to exclude under Zoning laws stores and other objectionable uses from residential districts.

## THE VALIDITY OF BUILDING LINES

An interesting case involving the validity of the establishment of a building line through Zoning ordinances has recently occurred in connection with the enforcement of the Pittsburgh Zoning ordinance.

That ordinance contains a provision to the effect that when the front walls of 80% of all the buildings on one side of a street between two intersecting streets have been set back from the street line,

No building hereafter erected or altered, shall be placed nearer to the street line than the distance established by the majority of the 80% at the time of the passage of this ordinance.

It is thus seen that an attempt has been made in the Pittsburgh Zoning ordinance to maintain the *status quo* so far as building lines are concerned, that is, where building lines have already been established.

In the case at bar (*E. J. White et al v. Board of Appeals, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, April Term, 1924, No. 2714*) the owner of an existing dwelling house proceeded to enclose his front porch—turning it into an additional room, thus adding it to the space occupied by the house. This work was done,

without obtaining a permit from the Building Inspector as required by law, and when called to account by that official, an attempt was made to secure such a permit. The permit was denied by the Building Inspector on the ground that the alteration in question was forbidden by the Zoning ordinance, whereupon the owner took an appeal, as provided by the Zoning Ordinance, to the Board of Appeals.

That Board, after giving careful consideration to the question rejected the appeal, and from that decision the owner took his case to the Court of Common Pleas.

In a decision handed down by Justice Shafer, the Zoning ordinance and the action of both the Building Superintendent and the Board of Appeals is firmly upheld.

The decision of the court in this matter is of considerable interest. The court says, among other things, the following:

Whether it is the province of the court in this proceeding to review the findings of the Board of Appeals upon such questions of fact, may well be doubted. The act giving the appeal requires the appellant to set forth that the decision is illegal, and wherein the illegality consists, and this would seem to confine the province of the court to an examination as to whether the proceedings were regular and found upon sufficient evidence, and whether the result of the application of the ordinance was reasonable.

The proper attitude of the courts in reviewing Zoning laws could not be better expressed. If all our courts throughout the country would follow this admirable precedent, Zoning would soon become firmly established, and the confusion which has resulted in some communities through conflicting court decisions would no longer exist.

Discussing the question of whether the Zoning ordinance is constitutional or not, the court points out that the ordinance had already been held to be constitutional in another case, and adds:

We are not informed that any case involving this question has reached any of the appellate courts of the state.

Discussing the question of the reasonableness of the ordinance requiring a building line, the court has the following pertinent comment to make:

The requirement of future conformity to a line already put in use by 80% of the owners in a square, does not seem to be unreason-

able; in fact, it would be difficult to imagine what regulation could be made on that subject which would be more favorable to individual owners and at the same time amount to anything as a regulation.

It is understood that the Pittsburgh Zoning ordinance is to be tested further in this case by an appeal to the Supreme Court, though further proceedings in this particular case are likely to await the decision of the latter court in an earlier case, referred to in our May issue, viz.: in *The American Reduction Company* case.

## THE RIGHTS OF THE MINORITY

A sensational case has recently been decided by the Supreme Court of Wisconsin in *Holzbauer et al v. Ritter et al* (198 N. W. 852) in which, we think for the first time, the question of the validity of a provision in the Zoning ordinance limiting the power of the local authorities to amend that ordinance except by a certain specified vote—in the face of protest by a certain proportion of property owners affected—is passed upon by the court.

In this case, the owner of a piece of property located in the residential district, as established by the Milwaukee Zoning ordinance, sought permission to erect a store on that property and had an amendment to the existing Zoning ordinance introduced in the Common Council. This resulted in the filing of a very considerable number of protests, largely in excess of the number required by the Zoning ordinance, against the passage of such an amendment. But notwithstanding this, the proposed amendment was passed.

The neighboring property owners, who are the plaintiffs in this case, claim that the City Clerk failed and refused to deliver their protest to the Common Council and to its Committee on Streets and Alleys; and that as a result the alleged ordinance was passed by the Common Council without the protest being heard as contemplated by law; and that this was a violation of the Zoning ordinance and of the law and a fraud upon their rights. They even alleged that the defendants in this case, the owner of the contemplated store, wrongfully influenced the city officials to withhold from the Common Council and the proper committee the neighbors' written protests against the proposed amendment.

The lower court granted an injunction restraining the issuance of permits and restraining the defendant from erecting the store building upon the property in question. The case was taken on appeal to the Supreme Court. Justice Jones in his opinion, after discussing the question of whether injunction in this case is the proper remedy, holding that it is, as the proceedings here have been brought by property owners whose interests are affected, says that he concurs in the view of the trial court that the amending ordinance was not legally enacted and did not authorize the permit relied on by the defendants.

An interesting point raised in this case, and illustrative of the great importance of having a proper enabling act in every case, was the contention made by the defendant's counsel that by the enactment of the Zoning ordinance the Common Council could not bind future Councils on questions of procedure; and that therefore the provision in the Zoning ordinance itself which provided for the three-fourths vote of the Common Council in the face of a certain number of protests of property owners affected, was not valid.

Had not the Milwaukee Enabling Act contained practically the identical provision, there is considerable doubt as to whether this provision would have been held valid by the court, upon the grounds raised in this novel contention.

Addressing itself to the propriety of this provision of both the Enabling Act and the Zoning ordinance against too hasty change in the Zoning regulations, the court says:

After property owners have made valuable improvements, relying on provisions in a Zoning ordinance, it is manifest that amendments making changes should be made after careful consideration and only in compliance with the law.

The defendants in this case also raised the question of the validity of the provision of the Zoning ordinance which prohibited stores in residential districts, but the Court made short shrift of this contention in view of the opinion handed down by Mr. Justice Owen\* strongly upholding the constitutionality of such provisions.

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\* *"Housing Betterment"*; May, 1924.



## GOVERNMENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT

An unusual case where Zoning laws have played an important part has recently come to notice, in which a village has sought to restrain a town, in which the village was located, from enforcing a Zoning ordinance to the detriment of uses to which the village wished to put a given piece of land.

The case in question occurred in the village of Larchmont where it was sought on behalf of the village to erect on property belonging to it, within the town and outside of the village, buildings for the storage of materials to be used in connection with the village water works. It appears that the property in question was located within a district which had been zoned by the town as residential.

The larger Governmental unit, the town of Mamaroneck, sought to prevent the village from proceeding with the construction of the buildings in question, on the ground that the buildings under the Zoning law were in a residential district, and that such buildings were prohibited in districts of this kind.

The case went to the Appellate Division which in a decision handed down recently granted an injunction restraining the town of Mamaroneck from interfering with the village or enforcing the Zoning ordinance against it, or in any way preventing the erection of the buildings in question. No opinion was rendered as to the validity of the Zoning ordinance.

The case, however, is an interesting one as showing how far Zoning ordinances are being availed of, not merely by individuals and groups of citizens, but by communities themselves as a means of protecting the enjoyment of their rights. (*Village of Larchmont, respondent vs. Town of Mamaroneck, appellant, Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Second Department, 203 N. Y. 957.*)

## WHEN ZONING FUNCTIONS PROPERLY

An interesting instance of how Zoning works when it is properly devised, with a proper Enabling Act, a proper Ordinance and a Board of Adjustment acting as a safety valve and means of adjusting difficulties, is found in a recent case brought before the courts in Pittsburgh (*H. P. Armstrong v. Board of Appeals*,

*Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County, October Term 1924, No. 1503).*

In this case the owner of a particular piece of property sought to erect on it a three-family dwelling, a type of construction which was prohibited in that particular district by the Zoning ordinance. The owner thereupon took an appeal to the Board of Appeals and the Board granted the appeal. A neighboring property owner who did not desire a three-family house erected in that district promptly requested the Board of Appeals for a rehearing, at which he presented arguments against the application. After considering the matter thoroughly in the light of this information and taking testimony, the Board of Appeals reaffirmed its previous decision and granted the permit; thereupon the neighboring property owner appealed from that decision to the Court of Common Pleas.

In an admirable decision handed down Justice Shafer of that court holds that the Board of Appeals acted within its powers.

The court was very careful to observe the nice proprieties of the situation and not to overstep the bounds of the power of the court, having a clear understanding of the way in which a Zoning law should function. What the court has to say on this point should serve as an example to other courts throughout the country who have to pass upon such questions. He says:

The question which arises on this state of facts is not what the court might have thought proper to do under the circumstances, if the matter had come originally before it, but whether or not it appears that the Board of Appeals have exceeded the authority given them by the act, to vary from it in particular cases. The limitations of such an authority are necessarily very indefinite. Upon a consideration of the whole case we are of opinion that it has not been made to appear that the Board was guilty of any abuse of the discretion given it by the act in making the order appealed from. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

## REALTORS TO THE RESCUE OF THE ILLINOIS ZONING LAW

As was foreshadowed in these pages, the Illinois Zoning Law enacted last year, is now being tested in the courts. The case

in question, which is now before the Supreme Court of that state, *City of Aurora v. Delatour*, originated in the City of Aurora, where certain interests desiring to construct a store building in a residential district were refused a permit by the local authorities.

Having been originally refused a permit for a store, later through subterfuge they sought to secure a permit for a four-apartment building, a use that is permitted in a residential district. Such a permit was granted and the building was erected two stories high, with two stores on the first floor and two apartments on the second floor. Proceedings were then brought against them for a violation of the law and their plans, and the lower court sustained the local authorities in their action. Now, an appeal has been taken from the decision of that court to the Supreme Court and the case has recently been argued at Springfield.

What makes this situation extremely interesting to all students of the Zoning movement, is the fact that the city of Chicago and 17 other Zoned communities throughout the state have joined in the case as *amici curiae*, to uphold the Zoning law.

The Chicago Real Estate Board which, under the leadership of Charles M. Nichols was largely responsible for the enactment of the Illinois Zoning Enabling Act and the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, has taken the lead in seeing to it that the present case is ably defended in the Illinois Courts and have even gone so far as to retain Edward M. Bassett of New York, the well known legal authority on Zoning, as counsel in this case.

Speaking of this action of the Chicago Real Estate Board a wealthy Chicagoan, not a member of the Board, said recently:

This is one of the finest, most public-spirited and generous steps ever taken by a Chicago organization. It's backing a fight for right, which will affect not only nearly every Chicagoan but property owners throughout the entire state. And it's going to be an expensive battle for the Realty Board so far as cash goes. I believe, however, it will be one of the best investments the realtors ever made, for victory will bring unstinted praise from all the state. Many of our big organizations are willing to go on record as backing a project but few ever show any inclination to spend real money and on such a scale as the Chicago Real Estate Board may have to do in this fight which is really a fight for every property owner in the state.

As more than 25 cities in Illinois have already taken advantage of the Zoning Enabling Act which is now being tested, the importance of this decision to the whole state of Illinois is apparent. It is inconceivable that the outcome of this case can be other than the sustaining of the Illinois Law; but it is dangerous these days to predict what action the courts are likely to take.

The ultimate outcome of this litigation is therefore awaited with great interest by all persons interested in the development of the Zoning movement.

## ZONING PROGRESS

Headed by New York and Chicago, 43 of the 68 largest cities in the United States having more than 100,000 inhabitants, have Zoning ordinances in effect. Thirty-two of the ordinances are comprehensive, regulating the use, height and area of buildings.

The Zoning Progress report of the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, issued in August showed a total of 261 Zoned municipalities, embracing approximately 24 million people, as having Zoning Regulations in effect. One hundred and sixty-three of these municipalities have adopted comprehensive Zoning ordinances, as compared with 98 municipalities that regulate merely the use, height or area only of buildings.

Since the statement in our May issue the following municipalities have adopted Zoning ordinances, according to the August Zoning Progress Supplement of the U. S. Department of Commerce:

ARKANSAS: Little Rock (Interim); CALIFORNIA: Bakersfield, Burbank, Burlingame, Glendale, Inglewood, Redwood City, San Mateo, Torrance, Ventura; CONNECTICUT: West Hartford; DELAWARE: Wilmington; MASSACHUSETTS: Arlington, Boston (Comp.), Haverhill (Interim), Medford (Interim), Melrose, Swampscott, Winchester; NEBRASKA: Omaha; NEW JERSEY: Englewood, Linden; NEW YORK: Albany, Dobbs Ferry, Elmsford, Greenburgh, Hastings, Lawrence (L. I.), Lynbrook, Rockville Centre; NORTH DAKOTA: Bismarck; OKLAHOMA: Tulsa; SOUTH CAROLINA: Columbia; WISCONSIN: Beloit.



Since the issuance of its August statement, the U. S. Department of Commerce announces that it has learned of 8 additional cities that have adopted Zoning, as follows:

ILLINOIS: Elmhurst, Springfield, Waukegan; KANSAS: Kansas City; NEW YORK: Oneida, Utica; PENNSYLVANIA: Scranton; VIRGINIA: Norfolk.

### THE STANDARD ENABLING ACT A GREAT AID

Thirteen of the states that have enacted Zoning legislation since January 1, 1923, have used all or a substantial portion of "A Standard State Zoning Enabling Act", which was prepared by the Advisory Committee on Zoning of the Department of Commerce to serve as a model for those desiring to introduce Zoning legislation in their states. The great care used in the preparation of the Standard Act has had much to do with its favorable reception.

During 1925 the legislatures of 34 states will meet, most of them early in January, and it is expected that Zoning legislation will occupy a prominent place on the legislative calendars. In nine of these states which have not as yet passed Zoning legislation, various groups plan to have Zoning enabling acts considered early in the sessions. In some of the other 25 states, which now have Zoning laws, plans are being made to extend the application of their acts since they grant the privilege of Zoning only to single cities or specific groups.

The thirteen states which have used the Standard Act in whole or in part since its tentative publication in 1923, are as follows:

Colorado: Acts of 1923, Chapter 182.  
Delaware: Laws of 1923, H. B. No. 29.  
Illinois: Laws of 1923, H. B. No. 478.  
Iowa: Laws of 1923, Chapter 134.  
Nevada: Laws of 1923, Chapter 125.  
New Jersey: Laws of 1924, Chapter 146.  
North Carolina: Laws of 1923, Chapter 250.  
North Dakota: Laws of 1923, H. B. No. 8.  
Oklahoma: Laws of 1923, H. B. No. 204.  
Pennsylvania: Laws of 1923, Act. 93.  
Rhode Island: Acts of 1923, Chapter 2315.  
South Carolina: Laws of 1924.  
Wyoming: Acts of 1923, Chapter 78.

JOHN M. GRIES  
Washington, D. C.

## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ZONING ORDINANCES

The U. S. Department of Commerce through its Advisory Committee on Zoning has recently issued a pamphlet in typewritten form comparing the Height and Use provisions of Zoning Ordinances in effect in 16 different cities. The purpose of this compilation has been to aid Zoning Consultants, as well as laymen taking up Zoning in different communities, in arriving at a knowledge of what the practice is in these representative communities.

The communities for which information is given as to the population of each in 1920, the date of adoption of the Zoning Ordinance, the agency responsible and the title of the Ordinance, are the following:

Akron, Atlanta, Brockton, Mass., Elizabeth, N. J., Hoboken, Jersey City, Long Beach, Cal., Milwaukee, Newark, N. J., New York, Omaha, Paterson, St. Louis, St. Paul, Washington and Yonkers.

In an explanatory Foreword the Committee says:

The Committee presents facts rather than opinions. Instead of printing all the ordinances in the country, a comparison is presented of 16 ordinances which had been passed prior to November, 1922. On January 1, 1924, 221 municipalities in the United States had Zoning ordinances in effect.

Cities are cautioned against the temptation to copy the ordinance of some other city. Nothing is more dangerous in Zoning than hasty imitation. Different cities have different conditions and each city should base its Zoning ordinance on those conditions. This pamphlet does not take the place of expert advice. No analysis of existing ordinances can point out the pitfalls in Zoning as well as can one who has had experience in Zoning, and knows its history—engineering, economic and legal. Zoning cannot be applied to a city like private restrictions, which are the result of private agreement. The validity of Zoning depends on its reasonableness and impartiality. Moreover Zoning regulations must have a provable relation to community health, safety, morals and general welfare.

## A CONSTRUCTIVE PLAN FOR STREET SAFETY

What promises to be fraught with tremendous importance for the future welfare of American cities is the movement inaugurated by Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover last May, in

appointing a number of committees to study, from a scientific point of view, the problems involved in the subject of Street and Highway Safety. This was done for the purpose of seeing what steps can be taken throughout the nation to meet the increasingly difficult and perplexing problems of traffic and transportation which now vex so many of our cities and which in some of them seem almost insoluble.

The relation of this problem to the subjects of Zoning and city planning is extremely close—far closer than the general public realizes—as one of the chief factors in bringing about congested traffic in city streets is the existence of high buildings in certain localities, thus attracting to those localities vast numbers of people who have to be moved backward and forward twice a day.

An intelligent city plan which distributes the population along comprehensive lines throughout the city will obviate many of these problems, and a really effective Zoning ordinance which regulates height of buildings adequately will do much to remove this traffic congestion. Cities planned with streets that are of sufficient width and with the purpose of caring for through traffic as distinguished from local traffic will also greatly aid.

In fact there is probably no subject that is so closely associated with street and highway safety as the development of an intelligent city plan.

The appointment of these various committees by Secretary Hoover a few months ago is therefore a matter of very great moment to the whole country.

The Committee on City Planning and Zoning is functioning under the chairmanship of Mr. Frederic A. Delano of Washington, who has already rendered very great services to the cities of New York, Chicago and Washington in connection with the Regional Planning of those three great communities.

In addition to Mr. Delano, the Committee includes among its personnel the following persons well known in the field of Zoning, housing and city planning: E. H. Bennett, Charles Henry Cheney, George B. Ford, E. P. Goodrich, John M. Gries, John Ihlder, Morris Knowles, A. Shirley Ladd, Charles W. Leavitt, Alvan Macauley, John Nolen, F. L. Olmstead, Charles B. Scott, L. E. Sheppard, Morris Sigman, Herbert S. Swan, Lawrence Veiller, R. S. Wallis and Robert H. Whitten.

At a conference held early in September in Atlantic City, preliminary reports were made by a number of the various committees, including the Committee on City Planning and Zoning, and at the present time that committee is busily engaged upon the preparation of its Report which it is expected will soon be given to the public and which will lay down the basic principles that should govern the control of street and highway safety in relation to the development of the city plan.

In addition to the Committee on City Planning and Zoning there are a number of other sub-committees dealing with such phases of the problem as Statistics, Control of Traffic, Construction and Engineering, Insurance, Education, Motor Vehicles—both for city streets and for rural highways.

A great national Conference to consider the Reports of these various Committees has been called by Secretary Hoover and will be held at Washington on December 15-17.

## A NOTEWORTHY DISCUSSION OF ZONING

What probably constitutes the most important discussion of Zoning heretofore had in the United States was had at the recent Fall meeting of the American Society of Civil Engineers held at Detroit the latter part of October.

In a two-day conference the City Planning Division of the Society, under the leadership of its Secretary Charles B. Ball of Chicago, developed an amazingly valuable programme to discuss the main aspects of the problems of Zoning.

A mere statement of the topics considered and the names of the distinguished persons who discussed the subjects indicates at a glance the very great importance of this meeting and of the Papers which were presented at it. The programme was as follows:

### I. FACTORS IN THE ZONING OF CITIES

The Health Bases of Zoning—George C. Whipple, Cambridge

Zoning for Use—Edwin A. Fisher, Rochester, N. Y.

Zoning for Height—Jacob L. Crane, Jr., Chicago

Zoning for Area—Harland Bartholomew, St. Louis

Building Line Zoning—Lawrence V. Sheridan and T. Clyde Hoffman, Indianapolis

Family Density Regulation—Robert Whitten, Cleveland

The Administration of Zoning Ordinances—Morris Knowles, Pittsburgh



## II. THE INFLUENCE OF ZONING ON THE DESIGN OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

Transportation—J. H. Bibbins, Washington

Drainage—Paul Hansen, Chicago

The Street System—T. Glenn Phillips, Detroit

The Telephone System—A. P. Allen, Chicago

The Water Supply—H. M. Pirnie, New York

Recreation Facilities—C. E. Brewer, Detroit

Copies of these papers in pamphlet form can be obtained from the Secretary of the American Association of Civil Engineers, 33 West 39th Street, New York City.

## THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF ZONING

Two notable papers have recently been contributed to the literature of Zoning on its legal side. One, entitled "The Constitutionality of Zoning" by Alfred Bettman of Cincinnati, was published in the *Harvard Law Review* of May last, another by Edward M. Bassett entitled "The Constitutionality of Zoning in the Light of Recent Court Decisions" was published in the *National Municipal Review* of September and reprinted as a pamphlet.

All students of Zoning especially those concerned with the legal aspects of the question will wish to avail themselves of these informing papers.

## INTERNATIONAL TOWN PLANNING CONFERENCE AT NEW YORK—APRIL 1925

The International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation at its meeting held in Amsterdam, Holland, last July voted unanimously to accept the invitation of the American City Planning Institute and the National City Planning Conference of the United States, and other affiliated organizations, to hold its next International Conference in New York in April of 1925.

The American City Planning Institute and the National City Planning Conference are accordingly perfecting plans for this great International meeting and for an exhibition of the leading features of American Town Planning development—to be held in connection with the great Architectural and Allied Art Exposition which is to be held in the Grand Central Palace at New York from April 20th to May 2nd, under the auspices of the American Institute of Architects and the Architectural League of New

York. This is expected to be the largest International Exposition ever held in the interests of architecture and allied arts and trades.

While it is not expected that there will be as many delegates from the other side of the ocean to this meeting as there were attending the meeting in Amsterdam, owing to the long distance to be travelled and the disadvantages of Exchange and the very great expense involved for European delegates, still it is expected that there will be from 50 to 100 European delegates at this important Conference.

Plans are now being developed with reference to the programme, for the financial support of the Conference, the Exhibition, for a Study Tour of important developments to show to the visiting delegates in the Town Planning field and the various other phases of an International Conference.

## BOSTON ADOPTS ZONING

Boston has joined the number of other large cities that have adopted a Zoning plan. This is the result of several years of effort, and after a thorough study of the field of Zoning by the special Commission appointed for that purpose. In one respect the Boston Zoning law is unique; for, Boston is now operating under a statute enacted by the legislature, applying only to the city of Boston, as distinguished from most communities throughout the United States which enact their own Zoning ordinances.

The Boston Real Estate Exchange took an active part in the development and adoption of the new Zoning law, and will be represented on the Board of Adjustment that has been appointed under the act, the members of this Board being selected by the Mayor under the terms of the act, from lists of nominees made by various organizations having a definite interest in the enforcement of the statute.

As Boston was *the* community which led the country in the first effort to Zone, by discriminating in its laws regulating the height of buildings, it is gratifying to be able to welcome Boston into the rapidly increasing group of cities adopting comprehensive Zoning laws. It is to be recalled that as early as 1904 Boston enacted its famous Height Restriction Law dividing the city into two districts; the "A" district, or Business District in which buildings

were allowed to be erected to a maximum height of 125 feet (which a year ago was increased to 155 feet), and the "B" or Residential district with a height limit of 80 feet and 100 feet on wide streets.

It was largely this practical example of the ability to discriminate between different districts of a city in controlling the height of buildings which influenced the New York Height of Buildings Commission in its studies, and its recommendations, for an act permitting the City of New York to be divided into districts in which a comprehensive Zoning plan could be worked out.

Although preliminary Zoning studies were started by the Boston Planning Board as long as 8 years ago, the formation of an organized movement for the adoption of a comprehensive Zoning plan in Boston was only begun in 1922 with the appointment by the Mayor of a Zoning Advisory Commission—composed of 11 members nominated by representatives of civic organizations and business interests to co-operate with the Planning Board in the development of this problem. Arthur C. Comey of Cambridge has served as its Zoning Director and the late Nelson P. Lewis and Edward M. Bassett were retained as special consultants on different phases of the work.

A distinctive feature claimed for the new Boston Zoning law is that there are only 2 main classes of districts, viz. Use and Bulk, whereas in most cities there are 3 main classes of districts, viz., Use, Height and Area. In Boston the Height and Area districts have been combined under the general term of Bulk; but it is to be noted that they find it difficult to adhere strictly to this classification and one frequently finds through the law references to height alone.

What is thought to be an important provision of the new law is a requirement that there shall be vision clearance on corners of streets to prevent vehicular accidents, a provision that is to be found also in the recently adopted Providence Ordinance.

Since the new law has gone into effect it is reported that a serious situation has arisen because of lack of precision in defining what constitutes a public garage. Apparently the law prohibited garages in certain districts and did not define the term with sufficient care to differentiate a public garage from a private garage, with the result that if the law had been strictly construed,

practically all private garages would have been prohibited throughout the residence districts of the city.

When this situation first developed conferences were held between parties in interest and the public officials, and a scheme was evolved to save the situation. In view of the fact that the legislature was not in session and that an amendment to the act could not be secured, it was decided to secure a construction of the statute by the Corporation Counsel to the effect that the word "garage" as used in the Zoning Act should be construed to mean buildings used for the storage of 5 or more cars.

In order to permit legally—or perhaps illegally—garages for a less number of cars, eminent legal experts have had to provide the highly fragile scheme of including in the term "accessory uses" (which are permitted in single residence districts) the use of private garages for 4 cars or less by adding to the statute (without any legal authority whatever) a provision that

The term "accessory use" shall not include garage space for more than 2 automobiles or for more than one commercial automobile.

All of which points a lesson and adorns a tale.

In other words: Be sure your Zoning law is right before you pass it.

## SPRINGFIELD'S CITY PLAN

One of the most carefully prepared City Planning Reports of the year has been issued by the Planning Board of Springfield, Massachusetts.\* The report contains 200 pages, and is illustrated with 50 small snapshot photographs and 25 or more page-size plans, diagrams, and graphs. Four large folded maps accompany the Report in a separate envelope. The scale of these maps is large enough to indicate all street names and much local information relating to individual properties. This degree of detail, unusual in a Report covering so large a tract, makes the document of immediate interest to every citizen, as he can see his relations to the city's growth and to the recommendations which are made for controlling that growth along desirable lines.

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\* *The Technical Advisory Corporation of N. Y. Consulting Engineers and Frederick Law Olmsted, Special Advisor.*



The following list of topics covered by the Report indicates its scope :

The Plan as a Whole, Building Zones; Railroads, Street Cars and Busses; Thoroughfares and Parkways, Downtown Traffic, Water Front Development, Parks and Reservations, Playgrounds and Recreation, Distribution of Schools and Other Public Buildings, Civic Center; Civic, Educational and Art Center; Tax Equalization, Building Zone Ordinance Amended to December, 1923.

ARTHUR A. SHURTLEFF  
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